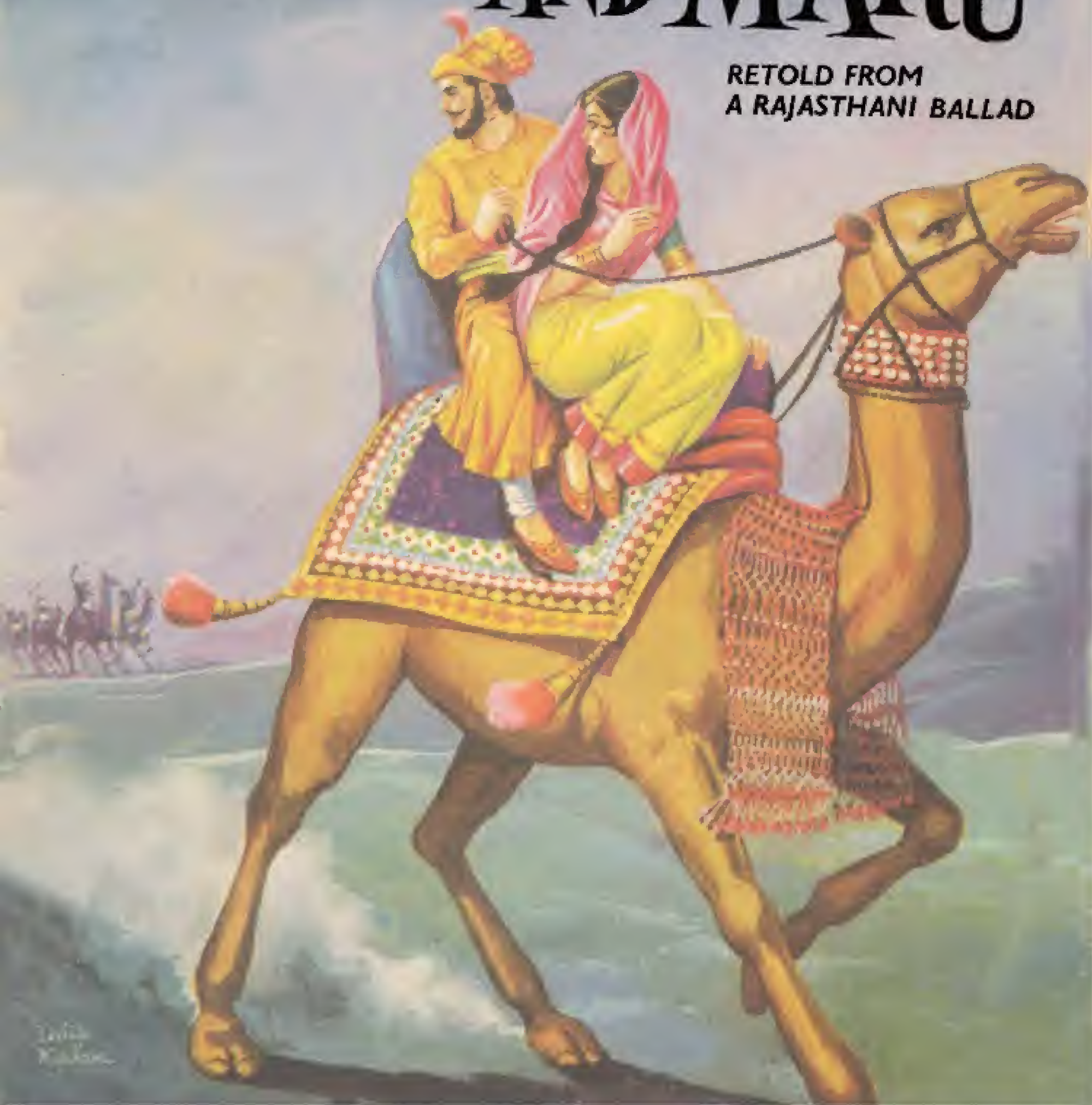




No. 302

# DHOLA AND MARU

RETOLD FROM  
A RAJASTHANI BALLAD



Devika  
Kishore



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Published by:

H. G. MIRCHANDANI

for IBH Publishers Pvt. Ltd.,

Mahalaxmi Chambers,

22, Bhulabhai Desai Road,

Bombay 400 026 and printed by him

at IBH Printers, Marol Naka,

Mathuradas Vissanji Road,

Andheri (East), Bombay 400 059.

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Bombay 400 026.

## Dhola and Maru

The ballad of Dhola and Maru was composed in 1620 by Kallol, a poet who lived in the reign of Raval Hariraj of Jaisalmer, in Dingal, the language used by ancient bards of Rajasthan.

One bitter fact of life in Rajasthan is drought. It destroys life as quickly as water creates it. The ballad goes that the bards sent to Narwar by Pingal sing the Raag Malhaar (the musical mode reputed to create rain) on the night that they reveal Maru's existence to Dhola. And sure enough, it rains with much thunder and lightning. It is interesting to note the specific mention of Raag Malhaar in the ballad; a Raag that conjures up the vision of rain in a land threatened with drought!

There is a set of fine paintings, rendered in the Jodhpur style, illustrating the love of Dhola and Maru.

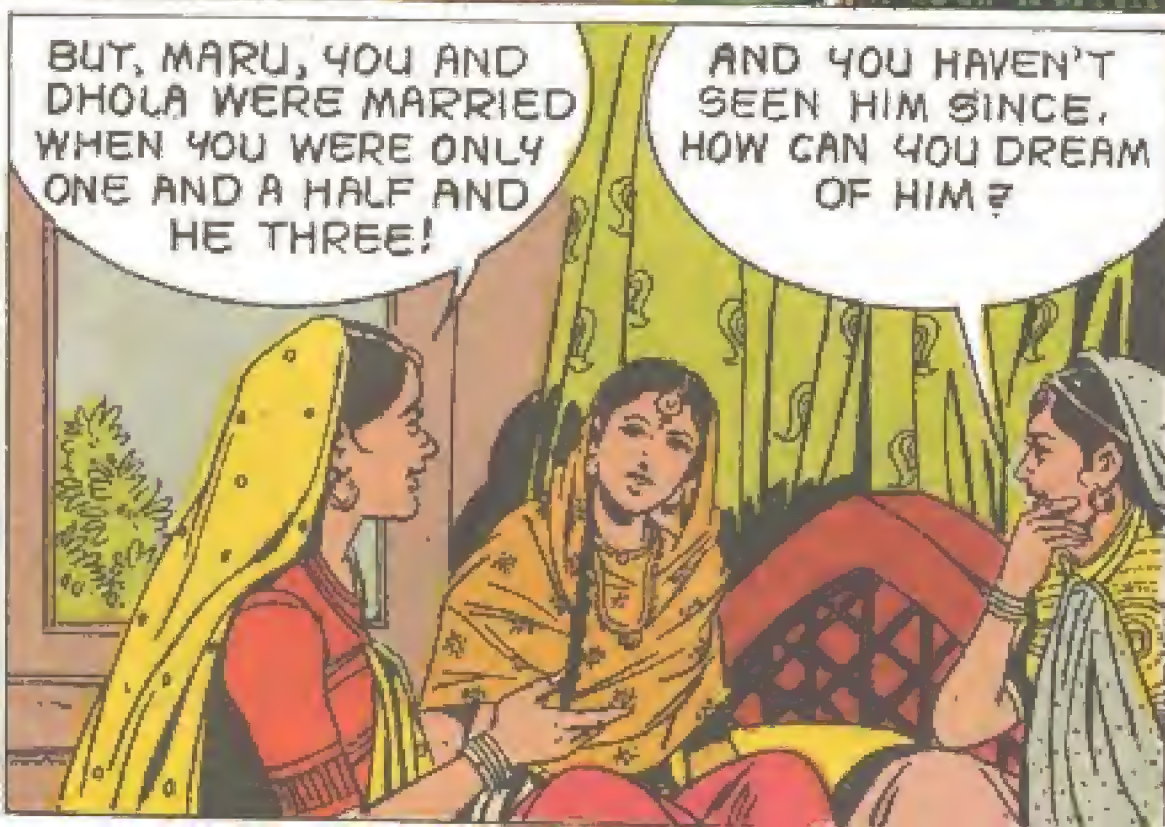
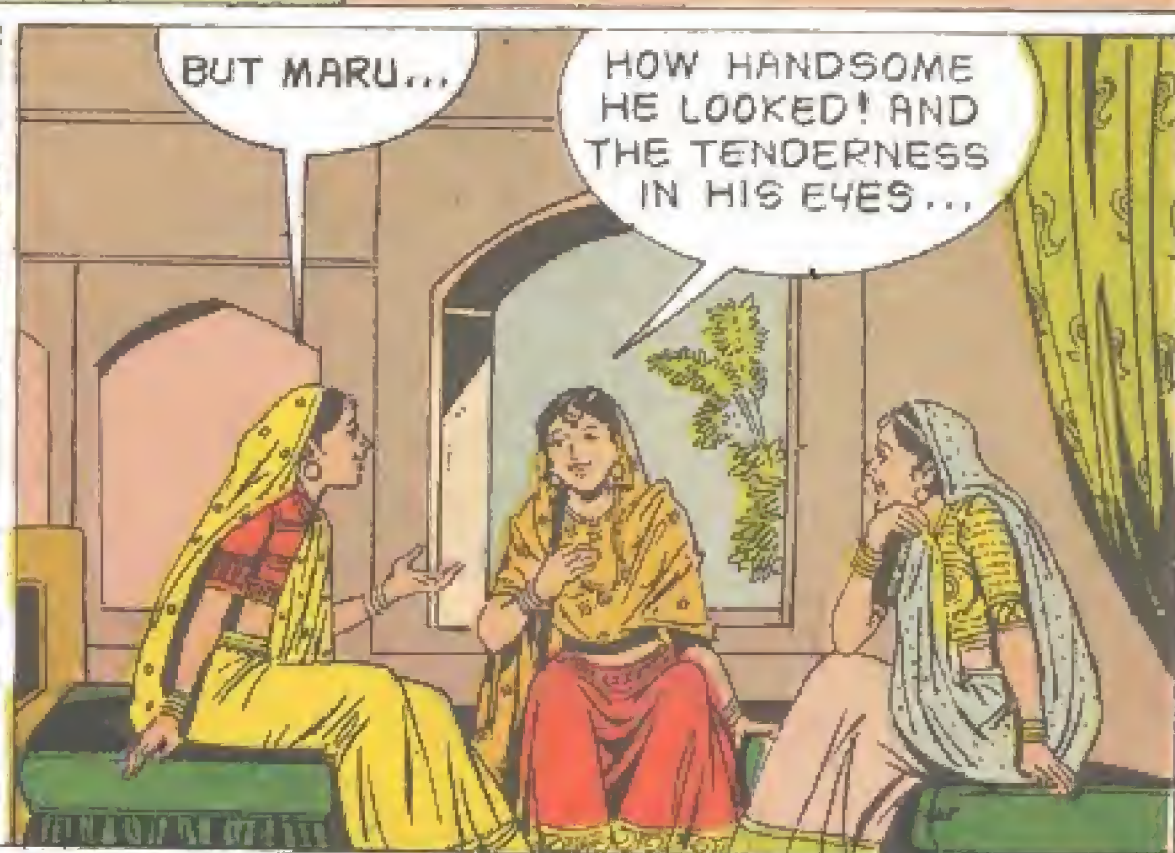
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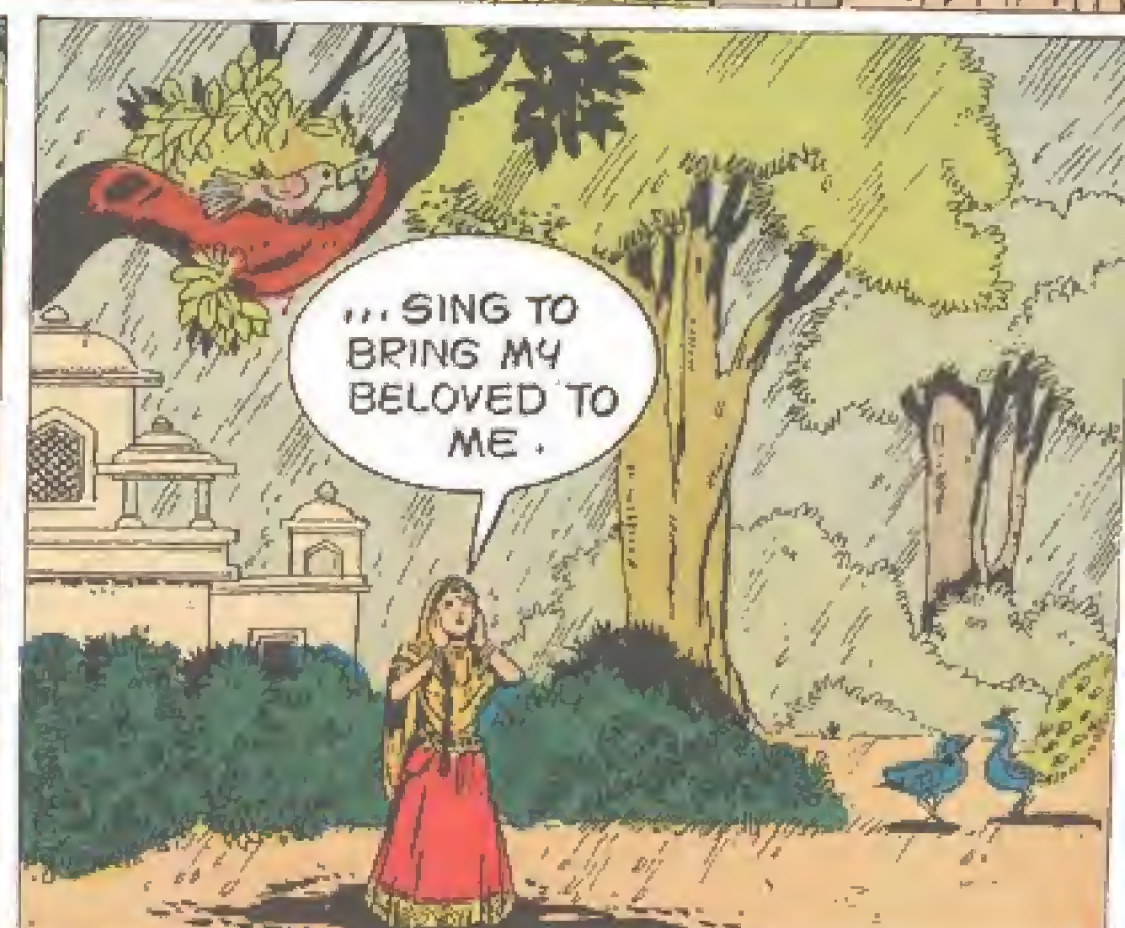
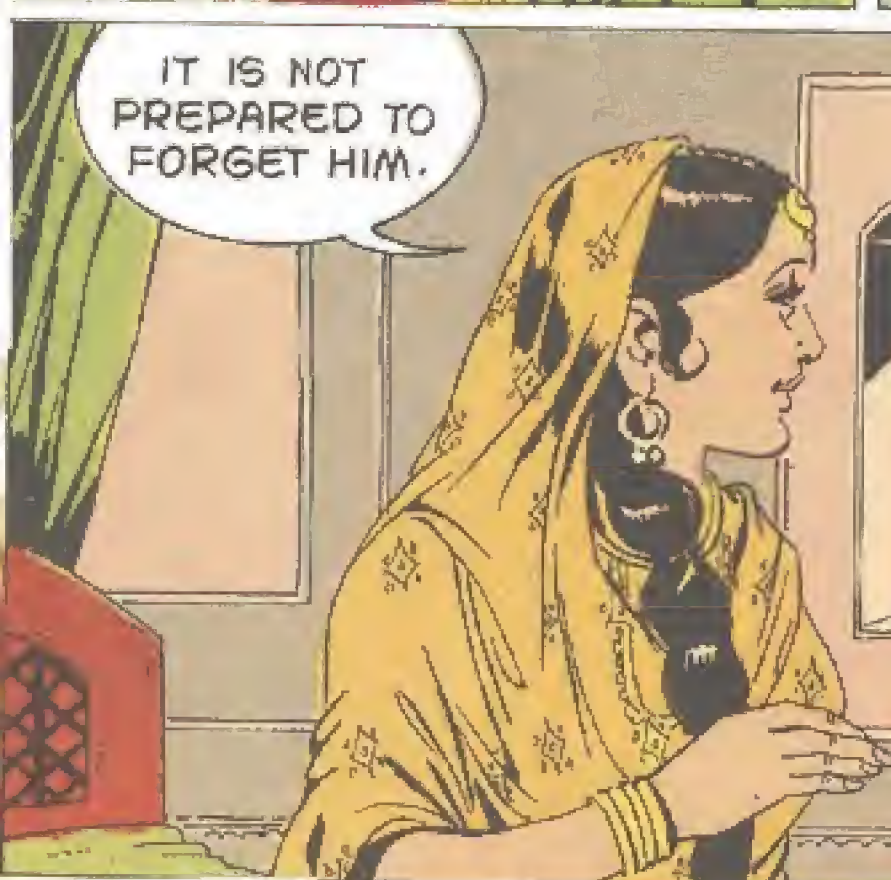
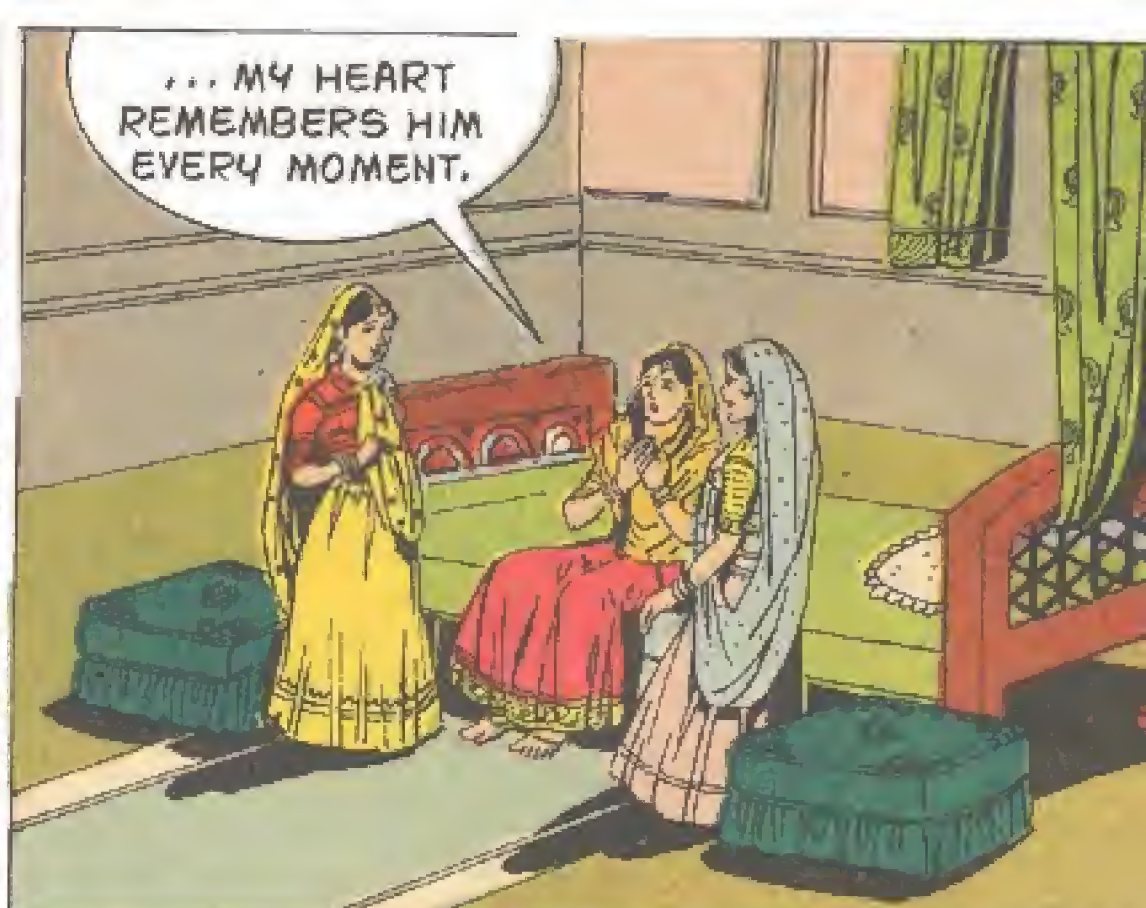




# Dhola and Maru

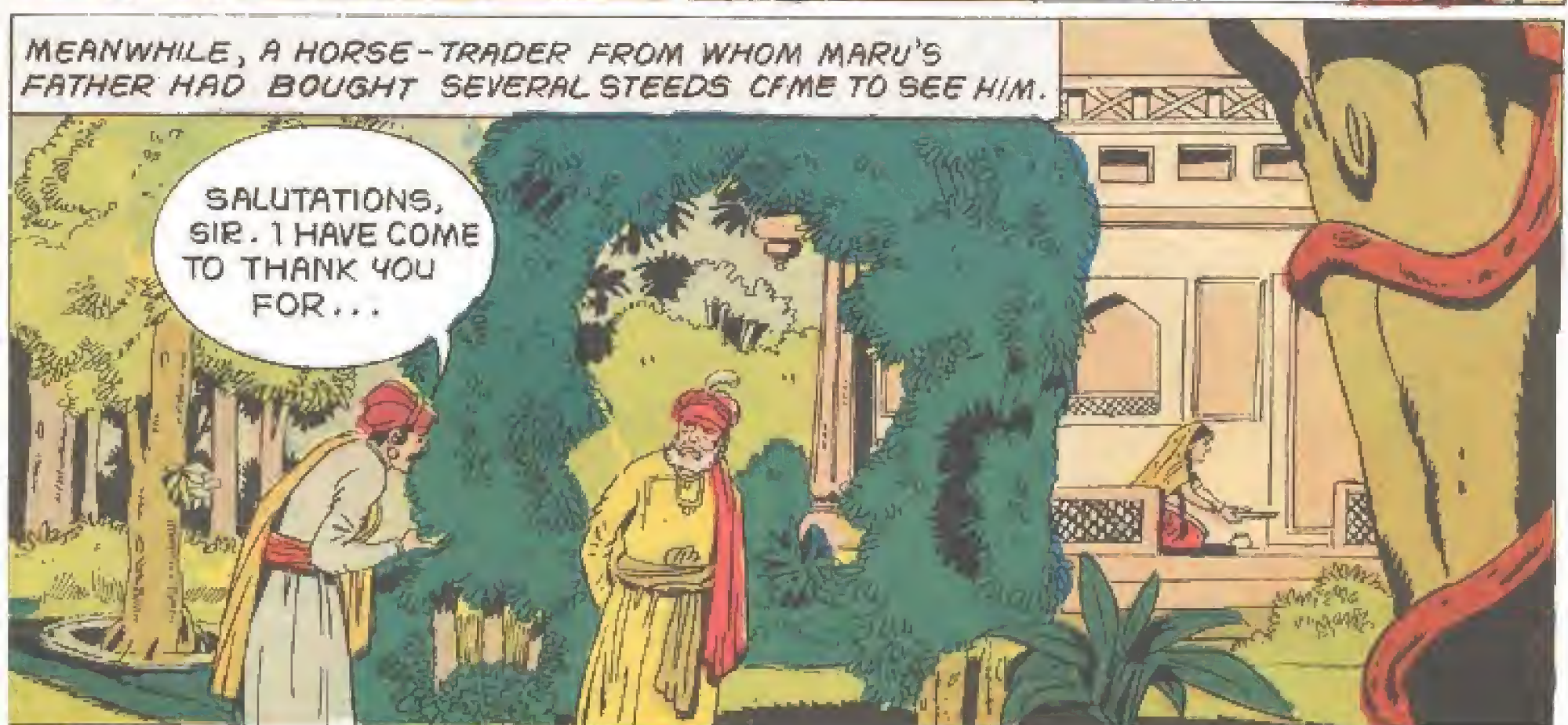






\* A BIRD CALL THAT SOUNDS LIKE 'COME MY BELOVED'

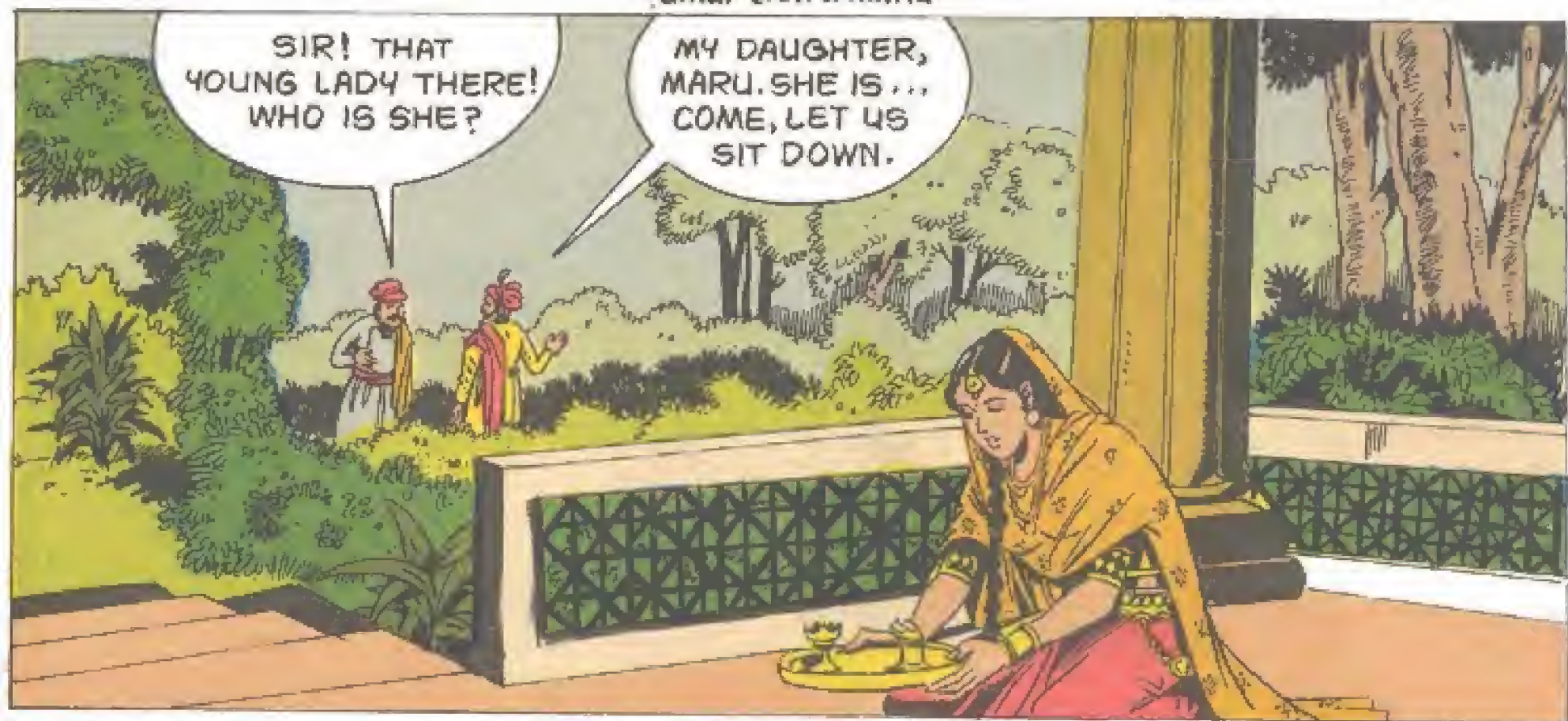






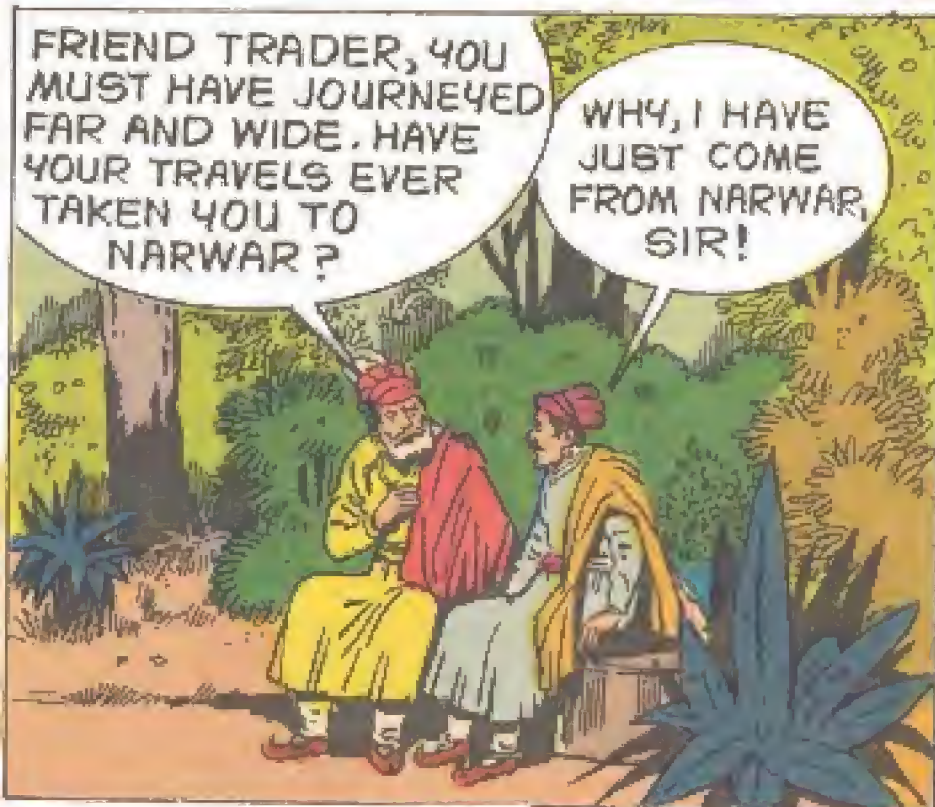
SIR! THAT  
YOUNG LADY THERE!  
WHO IS SHE?

MY DAUGHTER,  
MARU. SHE IS ...  
COME, LET US  
SIT DOWN.

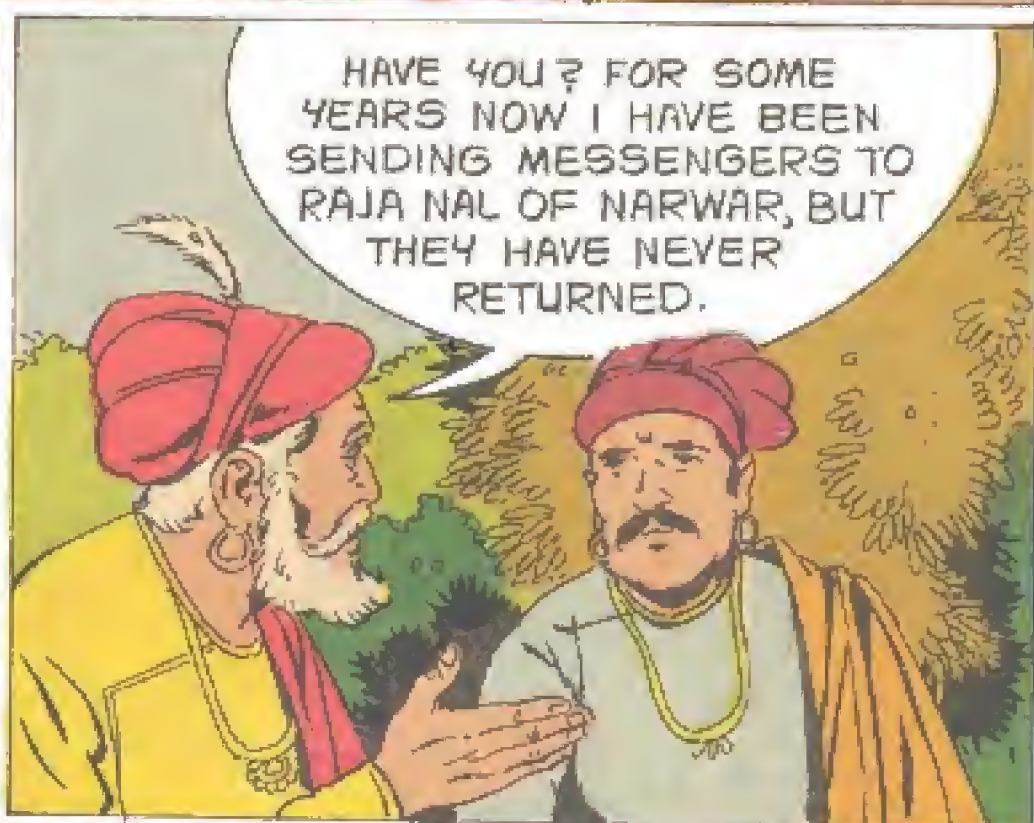


FRIEND TRADER, YOU  
MUST HAVE JOURNEYED  
FAR AND WIDE. HAVE  
YOUR TRAVELS EVER  
TAKEN YOU TO  
NARWAR?

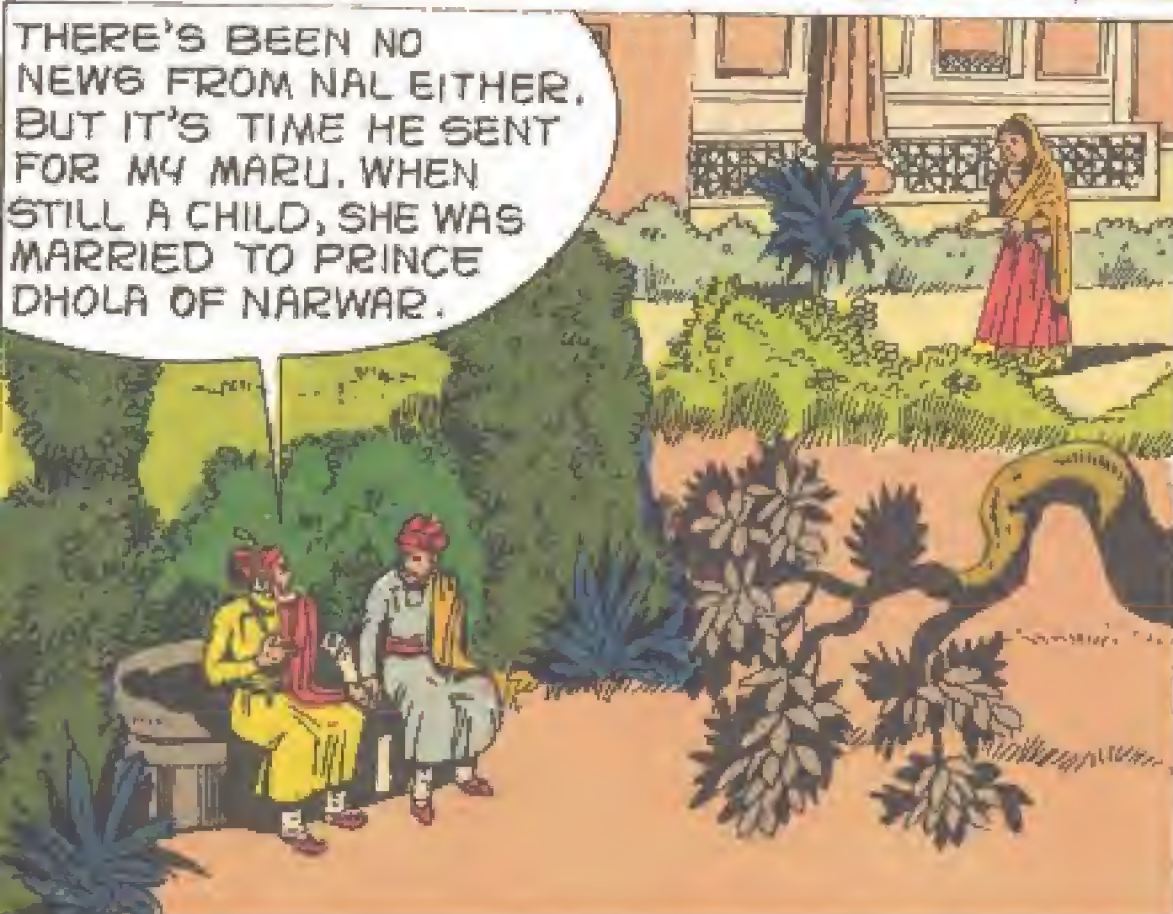
WHY, I HAVE  
JUST COME  
FROM NARWAR,  
SIR!



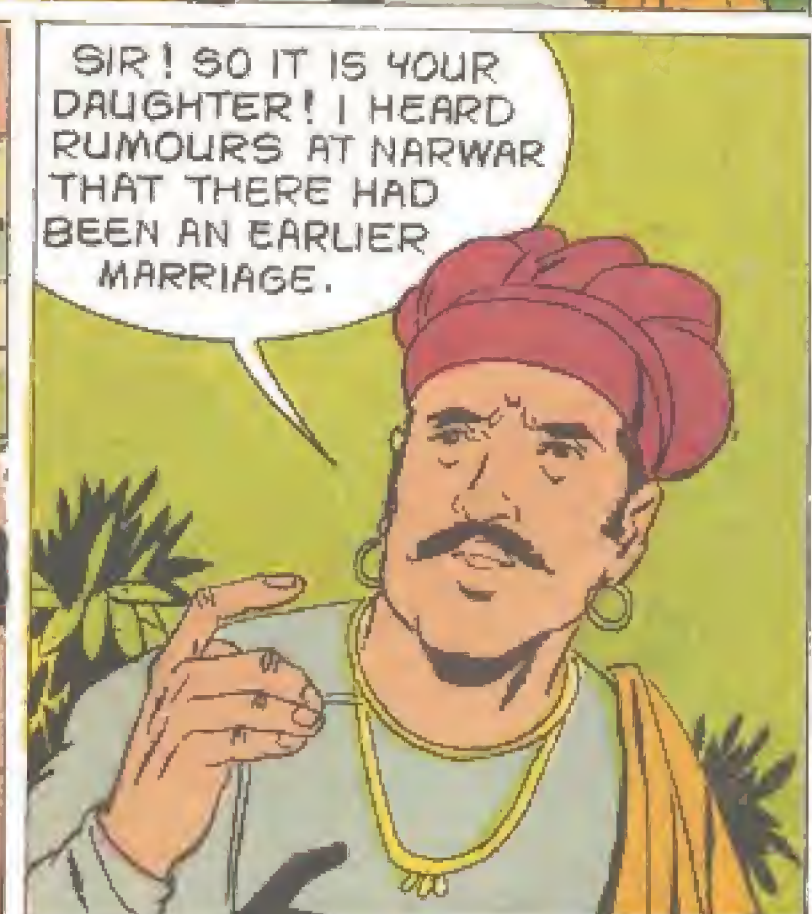
HAVE YOU? FOR SOME  
YEARS NOW I HAVE BEEN  
SENDING MESSENGERS TO  
RAJA NAL OF NARWAR, BUT  
THEY HAVE NEVER  
RETURNED.



THERE'S BEEN NO  
NEWS FROM NAL EITHER.  
BUT IT'S TIME HE SENT  
FOR MY MARU. WHEN  
STILL A CHILD, SHE WAS  
MARRIED TO PRINCE  
DHOLA OF NARWAR.



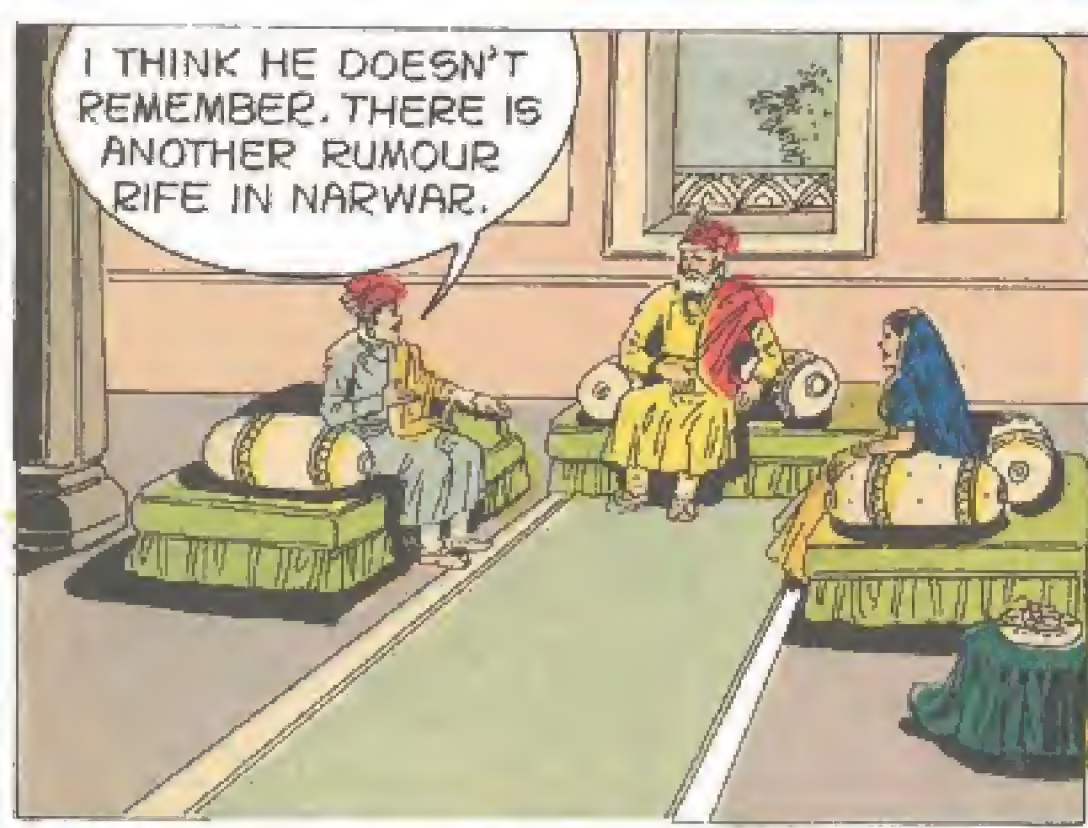
SIR! SO IT IS YOUR  
DAUGHTER! I HEARD  
RUMOURS AT NARWAR  
THAT THERE HAD  
BEEN AN EARLIER  
MARRIAGE.



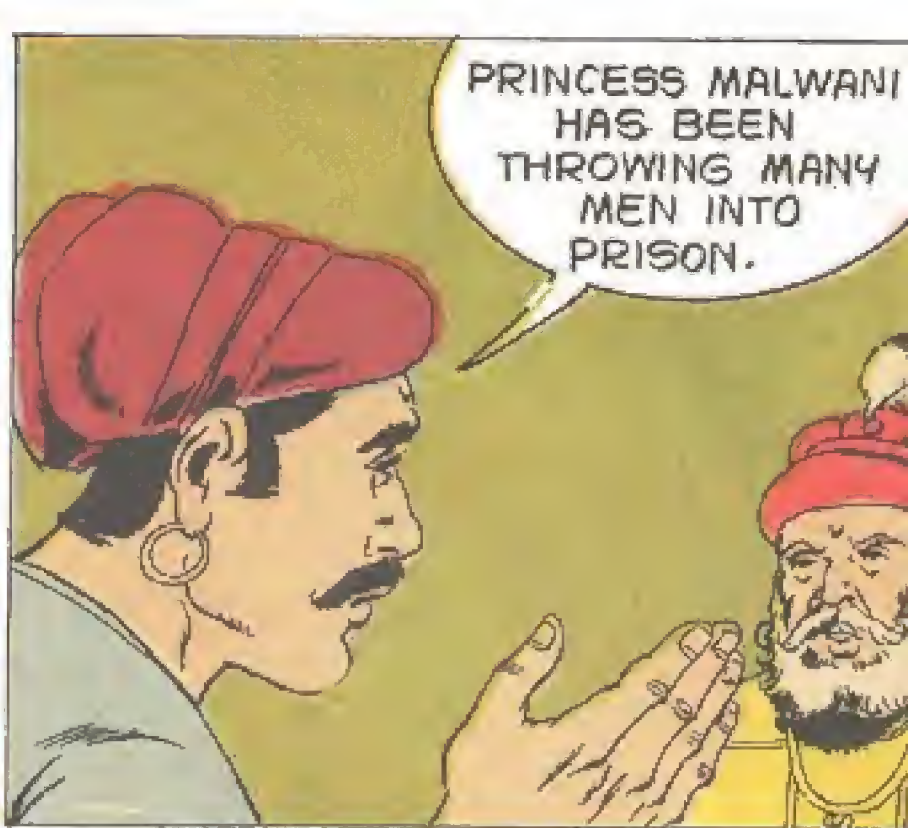










I THINK HE DOESN'T REMEMBER. THERE IS ANOTHER RUMOUR RIFE IN NARWAR.



PRINCESS MALWANI HAS BEEN THROWING MANY MEN INTO PRISON.




THOSE MEN MUST BE THE MESSENGERS YOU SENT.



BUT HOW DID SHE COME TO KNOW ABOUT THE FIRST MARRIAGE?

SHE TOO MUST HAVE HEARD THE RUMOURS AND FOUND THEM TO BE TRUE.



THEN... THEN WHY DON'T WE SEND SOME BARDS TO NARWAR TO REMIND DHOLA OF MARU?

AN EXCELLENT IDEA!

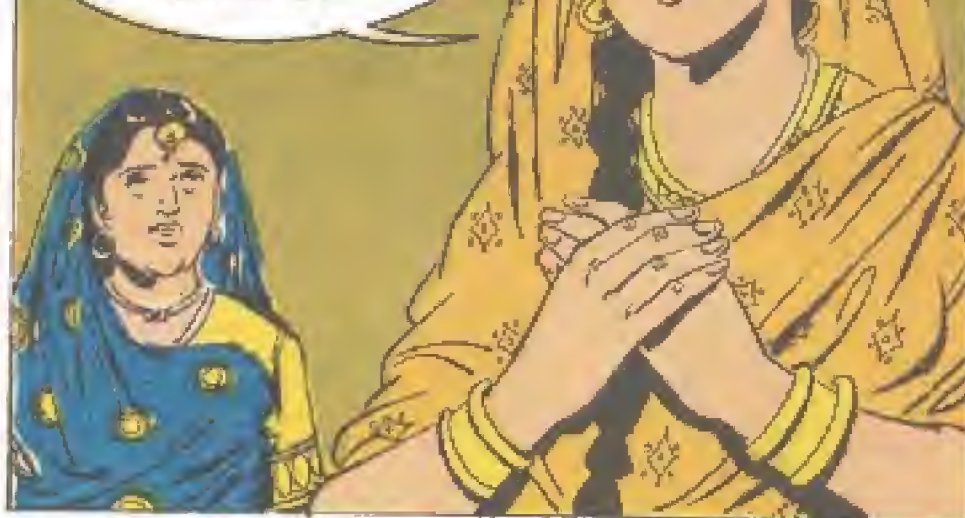


WHEN THE BARDS ASSEMBLED AT THE PALACE —

GO, GOOD BARDS, AND ENTER NARWAR BY ANY MEANS. SING SAD SONGS OF LOVE AND SEPARATION TO DHOLA. SING ABOUT THE BRIDE OF HIS CHILDHOOD.



AND GIVE HIM THIS MESSAGE FROM ME TELL HIM THAT I AM LIKE COAL, BURNING FOR HIM. TELL HIM THAT HE CAN COME AND REMOVE MY ASHES.



BUT TELL HIM THAT THOUGH MY BODY WILL BE GONE, MY SOUL WILL REMAIN WITHIN HIM... ALWAYS.



DOES HE NOT HAVE PAPER AND INK? DOES HE NOT WRITE FOR LAZINESS, OR ARE MESSAGES TOO HIGHLY PRICED IN HIS COUNTRY? IF HE DOES NOT COME,



PRINCESS! HE WILL COME!

WHEN WE GIVE HIM YOUR MESSAGE, HE WILL FLY HERE.



IF HE DOESN'T I WILL THROW MYSELF INTO THE HOLI FIRE.





ONE EVENING, MANY WEEKS LATER, DHOLA AND MALWANI WERE WALKING IN THE GARDEN, WHEN —

BARDS? HERE IN THE PALACE GROUNDS? SHALL I SEND THEM AWAY?

NO! THEIR STRUMMING IS TUNEFUL AND SOOTHING, DHOLA. LET THEM BE.



LOOK! THE MOON IS RISING AND JUST ONE STAR IS OUT.

YES, DEAR ONE.



THEY ARE LIKE US, TWO LOVERS IN THE SKY.



IF... IF A THIRD STAR ROSE BETWEEN US...



NEVER! YOU SHALL BE MINE... AND MINE ALONE! NO MESSENGERS FROM PUGAL SHALL GET NEAR YOU. NOT ONE OF THEM!





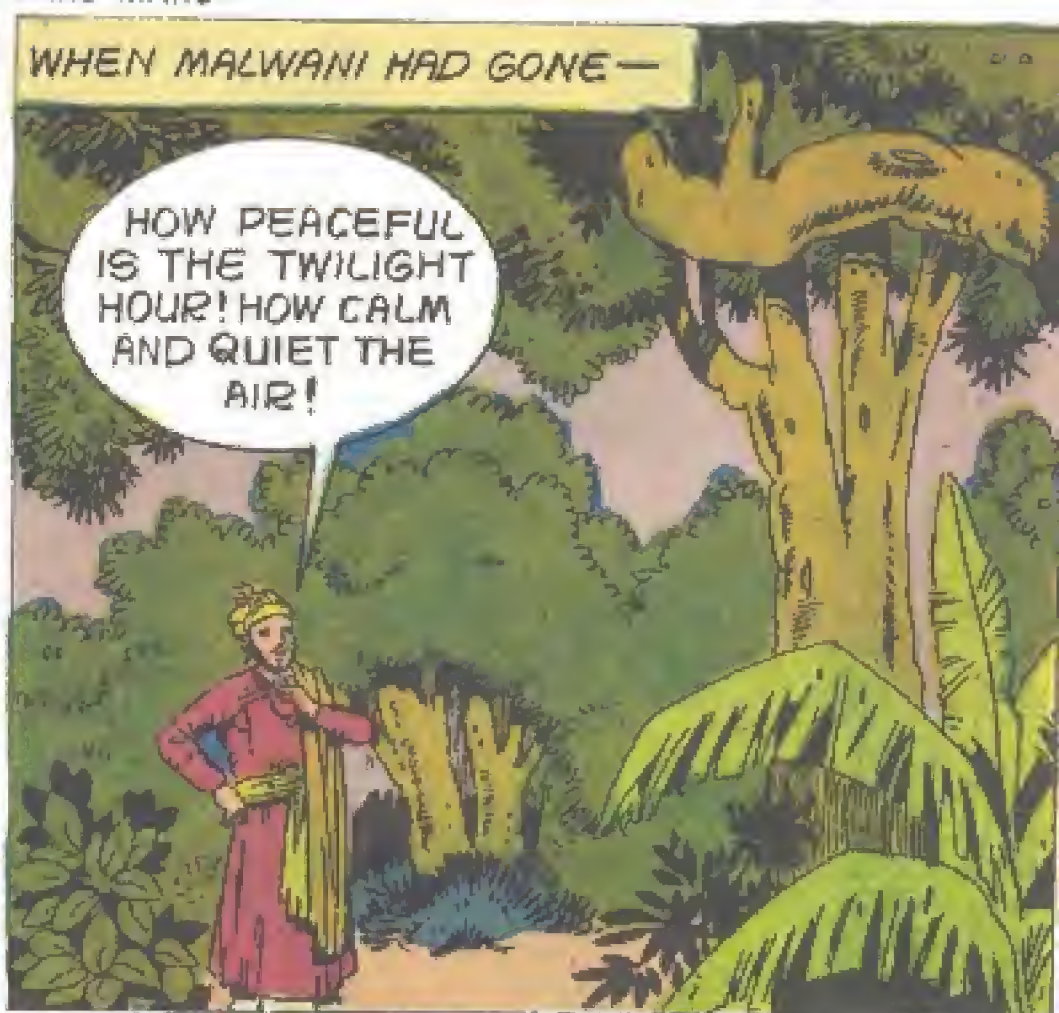
IT'S  
GETTING DARK.  
SHALL I GO IN AND  
SEE TO OUR  
EVENING MEAL?

GO, DEAR  
ONE. I'LL  
JOIN YOU  
LATER.



WHEN MALWANI HAD GONE —

HOW PEACEFUL  
IS THE TWILIGHT  
HOUR! HOW CALM  
AND QUIET THE  
AIR!



JUST THEN —

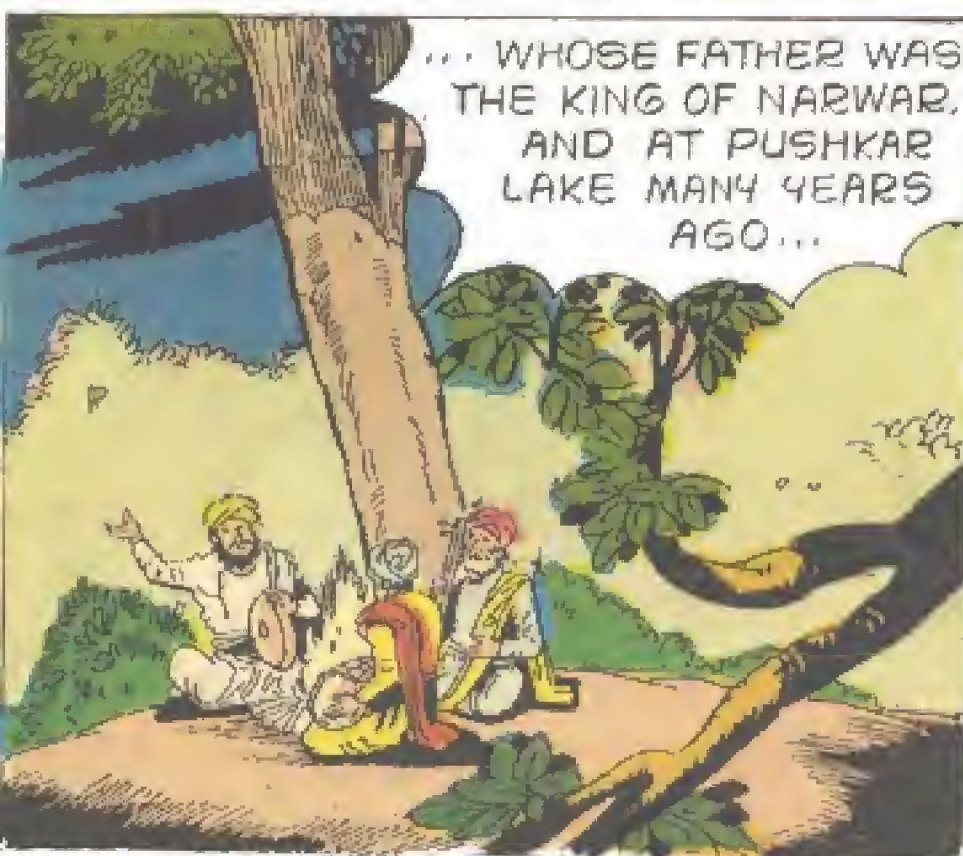
THERE ONCE WAS A  
CHILD NAMED  
DHOLA...



?!?



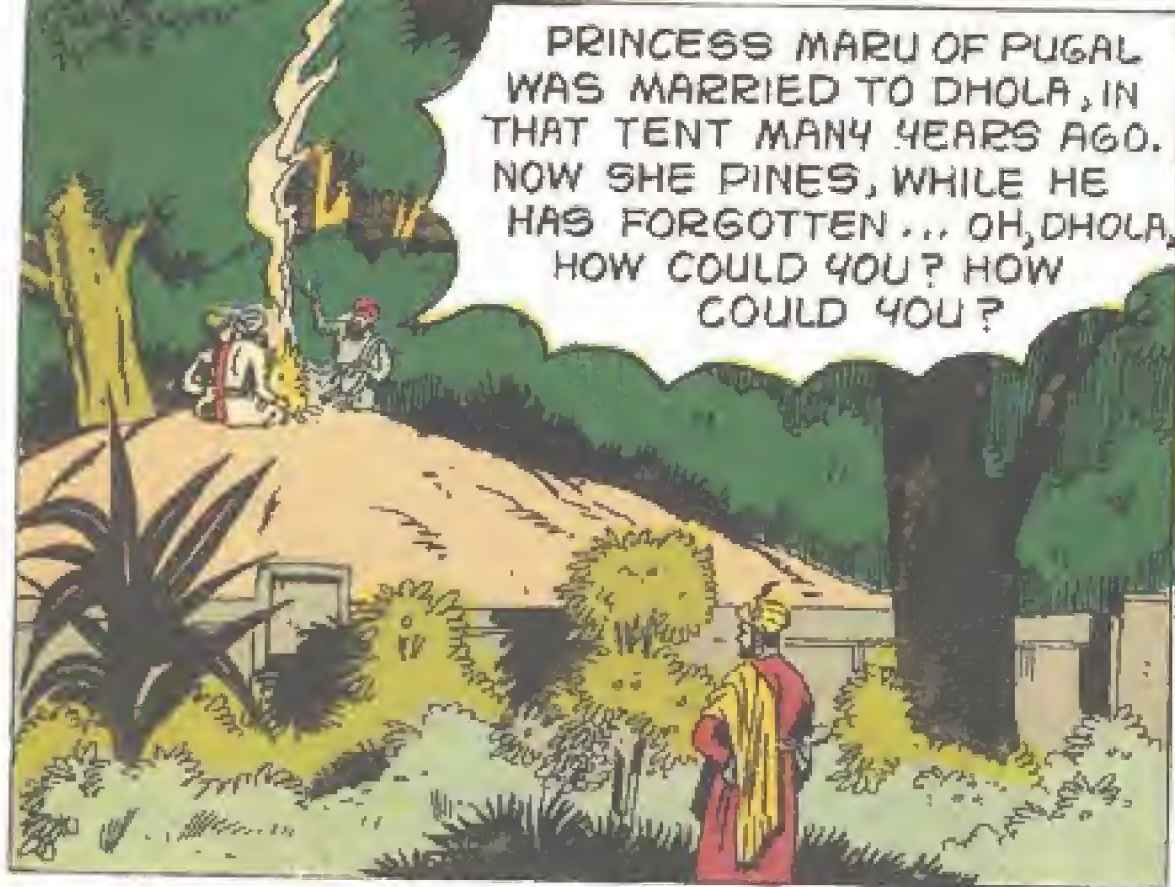
... WHOSE FATHER WAS  
THE KING OF NARWAR,  
AND AT PUSHKAR  
LAKE MANY YEARS  
AGO...



... THE HAND OF A  
BABY PRINCESS WAS  
GIVEN UNTO PRINCE  
DHOLA.







PRINCESS MARU OF PUGAL WAS MARRIED TO DHOLA, IN THAT TENT MANY YEARS AGO. NOW SHE PINES, WHILE HE HAS FORGOTTEN... OH, DHOLA, HOW COULD YOU? HOW COULD YOU?



OH GOD!  
IS IT  
POSSIBLE?



GOOD SIRS, THAT  
BALLAD YOU WERE  
JUST SINGING... IS  
IT TRUE?



IT IS TRUE. I  
WAS PRESENT  
AT THE  
WEDDING.

TELL ME  
ABOUT IT. I  
MUST KNOW. I  
AM PRINCE  
DHOLA.



YES, WE KNOW. IT HAPPENED AT  
PUSHKAR LAKE FIFTEEN  
YEARS AGO. YOU WERE LITTLE  
CHILDREN THEN, YOU  
AND MARU.



MUCH LATER—

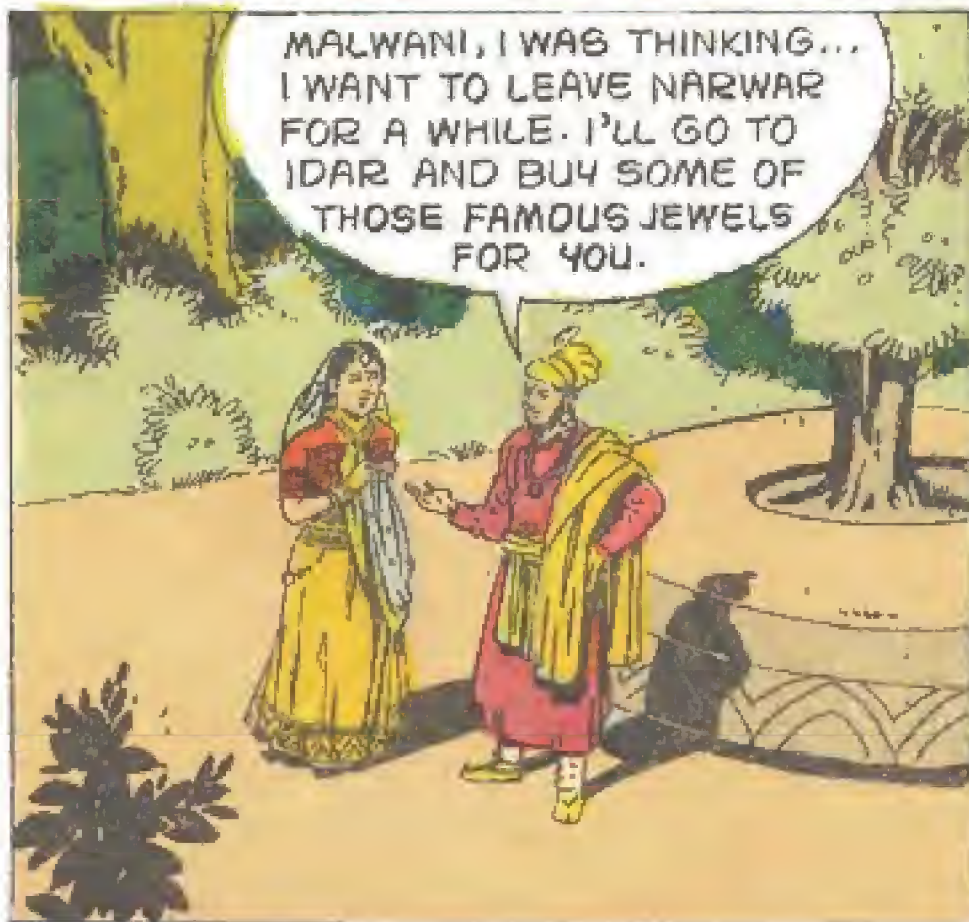
DHOLA, I HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU TO JOIN ME. INSTEAD YOU SIT HERE LOST IN THOUGHT. WHAT IS IT?

IT'S... IT'S NOTHING.

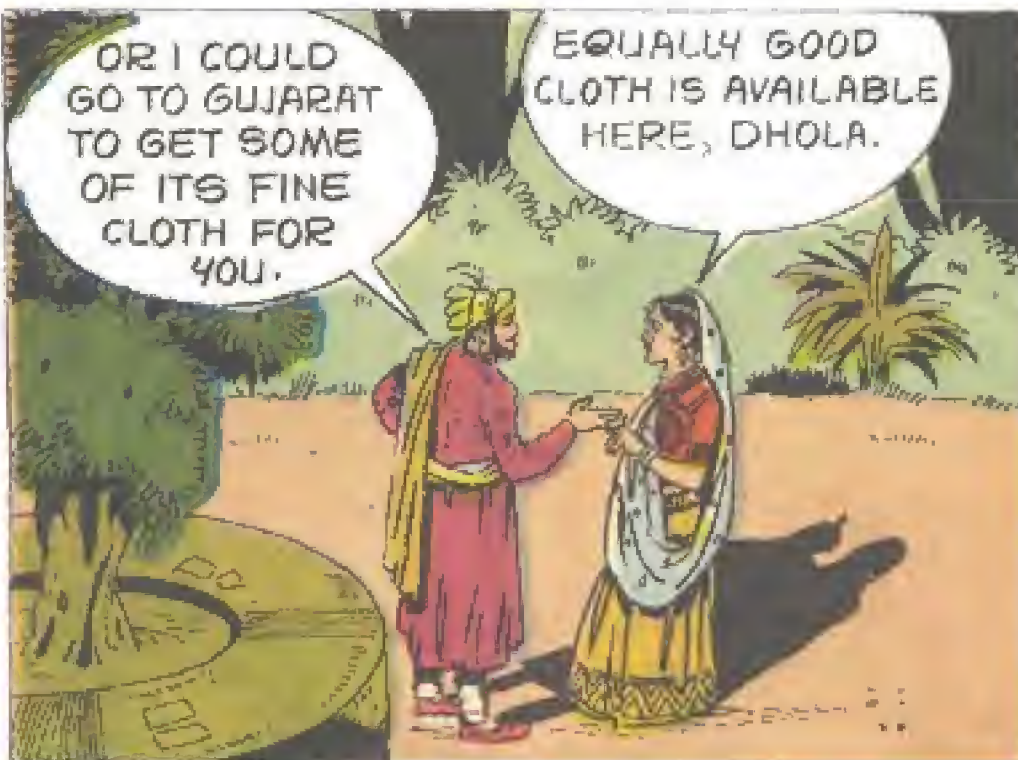


MALWANI, I WAS THINKING... I WANT TO LEAVE NARWAR FOR A WHILE. I'LL GO TO IDAR AND BUY SOME OF THOSE FAMOUS JEWELS FOR YOU.

NO, DHOLA. I DON'T WANT ANY JEWELS. I AM CONTENT WITH THE JEWELS I HAVE.

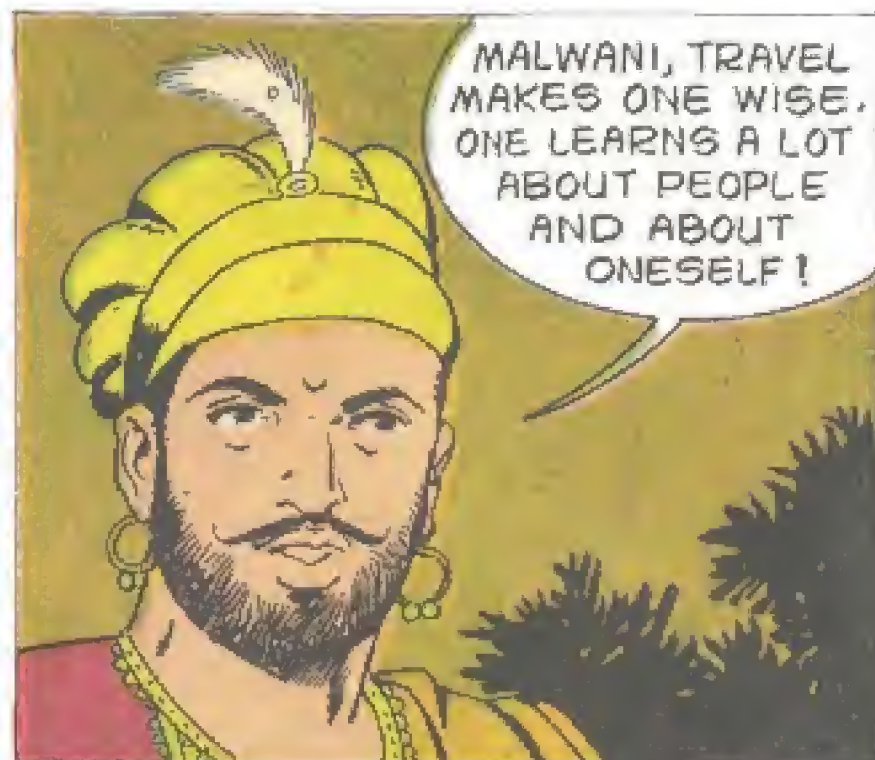






OR I COULD GO TO GUJARAT TO GET SOME OF ITS FINE CLOTH FOR YOU.

EQUALLY GOOD CLOTH IS AVAILABLE HERE, DHOLA.



MALWANI, TRAVEL MAKES ONE WISE. ONE LEARNS A LOT ABOUT PEOPLE AND ABOUT ONESELF!



WHY DO YOU SUDDENLY WANT TO LEAVE YOUR BEAUTIFUL KINGDOM, YOUR PALACE AND YOUR WIFE WHO WILL GIVE HER LIFE FOR YOU? I WANT THE TRUTH, DHOLA.

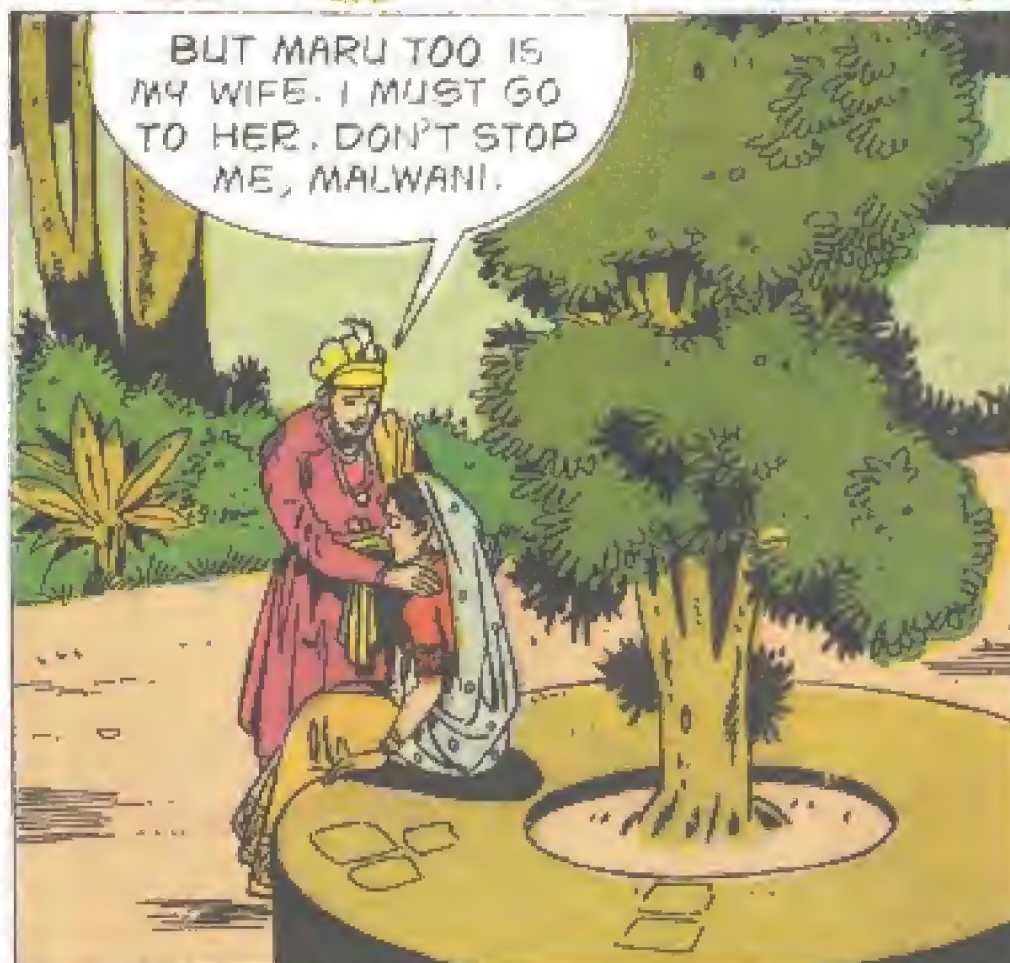


I... I WANT TO SEE PRINCESS MARU OF PUGAL. I WAS MARRIED TO HER IN MY CHILDHOOD.



DHOLA, DHOLA... I HAVE LOST YOU...

NO, MALWANI! I LOVE YOU.



BUT MARU TOO IS MY WIFE. I MUST GO TO HER. DON'T STOP ME, MALWANI.



AND SOON —

WHICH OF YOU  
HERE WILL TAKE  
ME TO MY BRIDE—  
PRINCESS MARU  
OF PUGAL?



I WILL, PRINCE DHOLA. I  
AM STRONG. I EAT GOOD  
FOOD AND DRINK PURE  
GANGA WATER. PLEASURE  
AND PAIN ARE ALIKE TO  
ME. I WILL TAKE  
YOU.



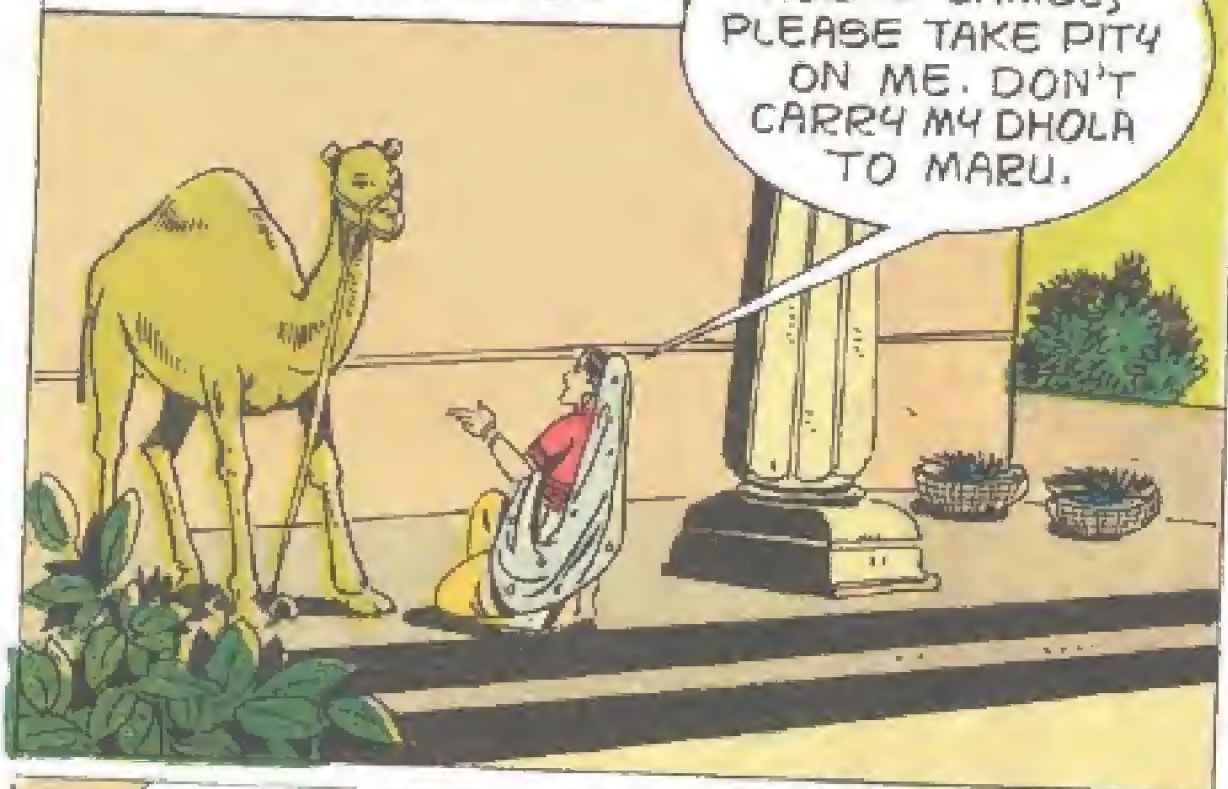
SO, MY MASTER, FIX THE  
BRIDLE ON ME. TIE  
MUSICAL BELLS ROUND  
MY NECK AND I WILL  
TAKE YOU TO MARU  
WHenever YOU WISH.

THANK YOU,  
DEAR  
FRIEND.





A FEW MINUTES LATER—



NOBLE CAMEL,  
PLEASE TAKE PITY  
ON ME. DON'T  
CARRY MY DHOLA  
TO MARU.



PRETEN  
THAT YOU  
ARE LA

AND IF I AM FOUND OUT?  
I WILL BE BEATEN AND  
STARVED TO DEATH. IF I  
TAKE THE PRINCE TO  
HIS BRIDE'S HOUSE,  
THEY WILL GIVE ME  
GOOD FOOD TO EAT.

I WILL GIVE YOU GOOD FOOD.  
I WILL TIE YOU IN THE SHADE  
OF A BANYAN TREE AND  
RUB YOUR BODY WITH  
SWEET SMELLING OIL. I  
ALSO PROMISE THAT YOU  
SHALL NOT BE  
BRANDED.

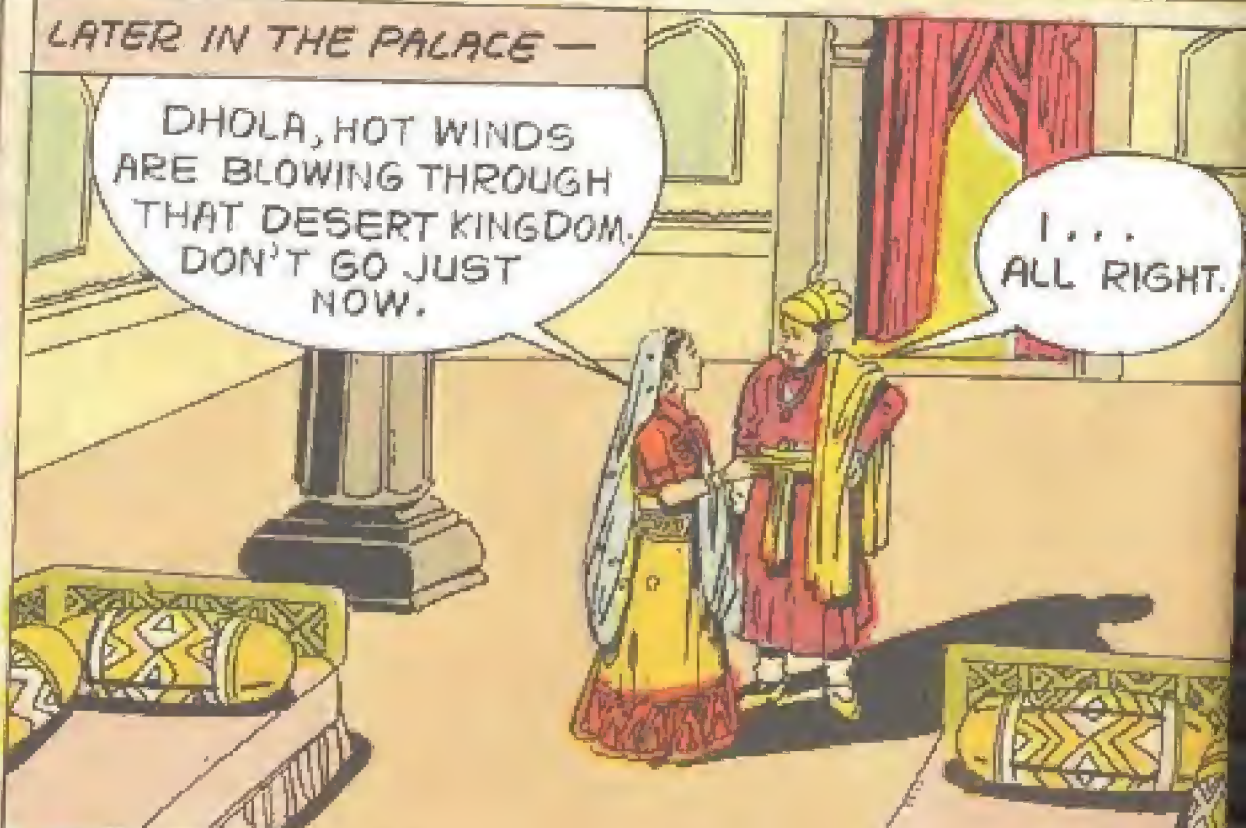


THESE ARE TEMPTING  
OFFERS. BUT PRINCESS,  
I CANNOT BETRAY  
MY MASTER. I AM  
SORRY.



LATER IN THE PALACE —

DHOLA, HOT WINDS  
ARE BLOWING THROUGH  
THAT DESERT KINGDOM.  
DON'T GO JUST  
NOW.



I...  
ALL RIGHT.



TWO MONTHS LATER—

MALWANI,  
SUMMER IS  
OVER. LET ME  
GO.DHOLA, EVEN THE  
STORK DOES NOT SET  
FOOT ON THE GROUND  
DURING THE RAINY  
SEASON.

ANOTHER TWO MONTHS LATER—

MALWANI, THE  
RAINS HAVE LEFT  
US. IT IS WINTER  
NOW. I MUST GO.FORGET PUGAL, DHOLA.  
IT IS TOO WARM IN SUMMER,  
TOO MUDDY DURING THE  
RAINY SEASON AND TOO  
COLD IN WINTER.MALWANI, DON'T  
YOU THINK MARU HAS  
WAITED AND PINED  
FOR ME ENOUGH?THEN ... PLEASE ...  
GO ... BUT ONLY  
WHEN I AM ASLEEP...



pages from  
**MAHABHARATA-1**



**VEDA VYASA**

RISHI VEDA VYASA DWELT ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT LED TO THE GREAT WAR BETWEEN HIS GRAND-SONS, THE KAURAVAS AND THE PANDAVAS; ON THE WAR ITSELF; AND ON ITS AFTERMATH. AND IN HIS WISDOM HE SAW THEM AND THEIR ACTS AS NEITHER WHITE NOR BLACK BUT GREY. HE SAW IN THEIR LIVES THE HUMAN CONDITION WITH AN INSIGHT, A UNIVERSALITY THAT IS GIVEN ONLY TO THE GREATEST OF POETS.

AND HE COMPOSED AN EPIC POEM MAHABHARATA FOR WHICH GANESHA AGREED TO BE THE SCRIBE. VYASA BEGAN WITH THE INVOCATION:

OM! HAVING INVOKED THE GRACE OF NARAYANA AND NARA AND SARASWATI MUST THE WORD JAYA BE UTTERED.



WHEN AT LAST THE WORK WAS COMPLETED, VYASA TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES—SUMANTA, JAIMINI, PAILA, VAISHAMPAYANA AND HIS OWN SON SHUKA—THE VEDAS WITH THE MAHABHARATA AS THE FIFTH.



BUT ONLY WHEN THE PROTAGONISTS OF HIS WORK HAD DEPARTED FROM THE EARTH DID THAT AGELESS SEER PERMIT THEIR STORY TO BE RECITED IN PUBLIC AND THIS IS HOW IT CAME TO PASS.



LEARNING THAT JANAMEJAYA, HIS GRANDSON'S GREAT-GRANDSON WAS INSTALLED FOR THE SARPA SATRA<sup>®</sup>, VYASA WITH HIS DISCIPLES CAME TO THE SACRIFICIAL PAVILION.



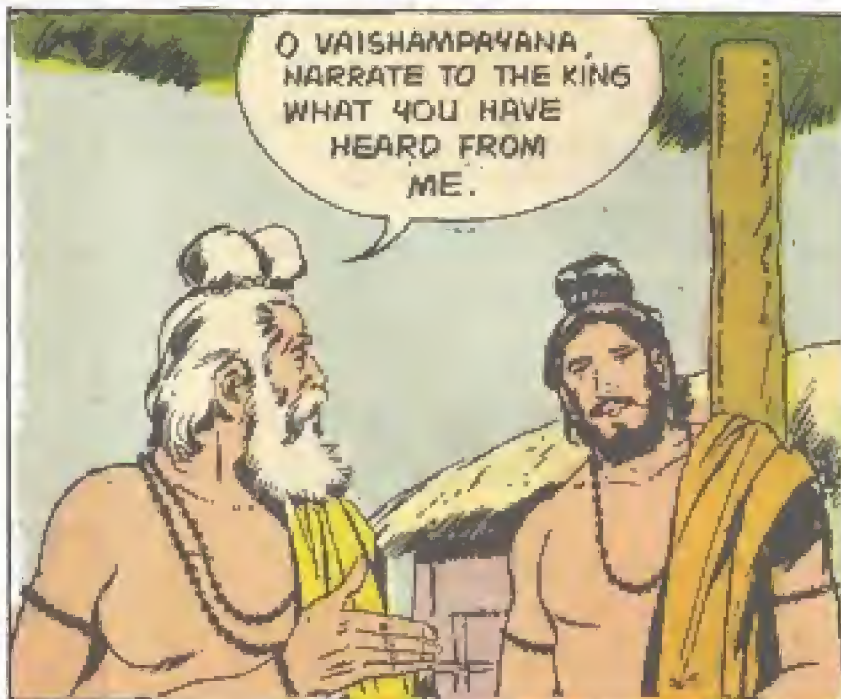
\* SNAKE  
® 12-YEAR- LONG YAGNA

AFTER RECEIVING HIM AND WORSHIPPING HIM ACCORDING TO THE PRESCRIBED RITES, JANAMEJAYA SAID TO VYASA:



YOU HAVE BEEN A WITNESS, O SAGE, TO THE FEUD BETWEEN THE KAURAVAS AND THE PANDAVAS. I WISH TO HEAR FROM YOU OF THOSE EVENTS. WHY DID MY ANCESTORS WAR WITH ONE ANOTHER? IT COULD NOT HAVE BEEN A SIMPLE CAUSE FOR WHICH THOSE VIRTUOUS ONES SLEW THOSE WHOM THEY SHOULD NOT HAVE AND FOR WHICH THE WORLD STILL APPLAUDS THEM. TELL ME, O SAGE, WHY THAT GREAT HOLOCAUST?

O VAISHAMPAYANA, NARRATE TO THE KING WHAT YOU HAVE HEARD FROM ME.



THE DISCIPLE FIRST PROSTRATED HIMSELF BEFORE THE GURU...





...AND THEN ADDRESSED THE KING.

O MONARCH,  
I SHALL RECITE IT.  
BUT THIS HISTORY TOLD  
BY RISHI VYASA CONSISTS  
OF OVER A HUNDRED  
THOUSAND VERSES AND  
WILL TAKE TIME.

IT IS A DISCOURSE ON  
DHARMA<sup>Ⓢ</sup> ON ARTHA<sup>‡</sup> ON  
KAMA\*. WHAT IS CONTAIN-  
ED IN THIS WORK ABOUT  
VIRTUE, WEALTH, PLEASURE  
AND SALVATION MAY BE  
SEEN ELSEWHERE. BUT...

... WHATEVER  
IS NOT CONTAINED  
IN THIS IS NOT TO BE  
FOUND ANYWHERE.  
HE THAT KNOWS IT  
MAY BE REGARDED  
AS ONE WHO KNOWS  
THE VEDAS.



Ⓢ DHARMA ( ONE'S DUTY ) ‡ ARTHA ( WEALTH ) \* KAMA ( THE FULFILMENT OF DESIRES )

AND THESE WORDS HOLD GOOD TO THIS DAY AS ALL WHO HAVE READ VYASA'S IMMORTAL  
WORK AND TRIED TO IMBIBE ITS ESSENCE WILL AGREE.

**FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER !**



A  
COMPREHENSIVE  
ACCOUNT  
OF

**MAHABHARATA**

IN YOUR FAVOURITE SERIES

**AMAR CHITRA KATHA**



AND SO—

PRINCESS, IT IS FIFTEEN NIGHTS SINCE YOU SLEPT.

TO KEEP MY DHOLA BY ME, I CAN KEEP AWAKE FOR... FOR...

... MONTHS... IF... NECESSARY...



SUDDENLY—

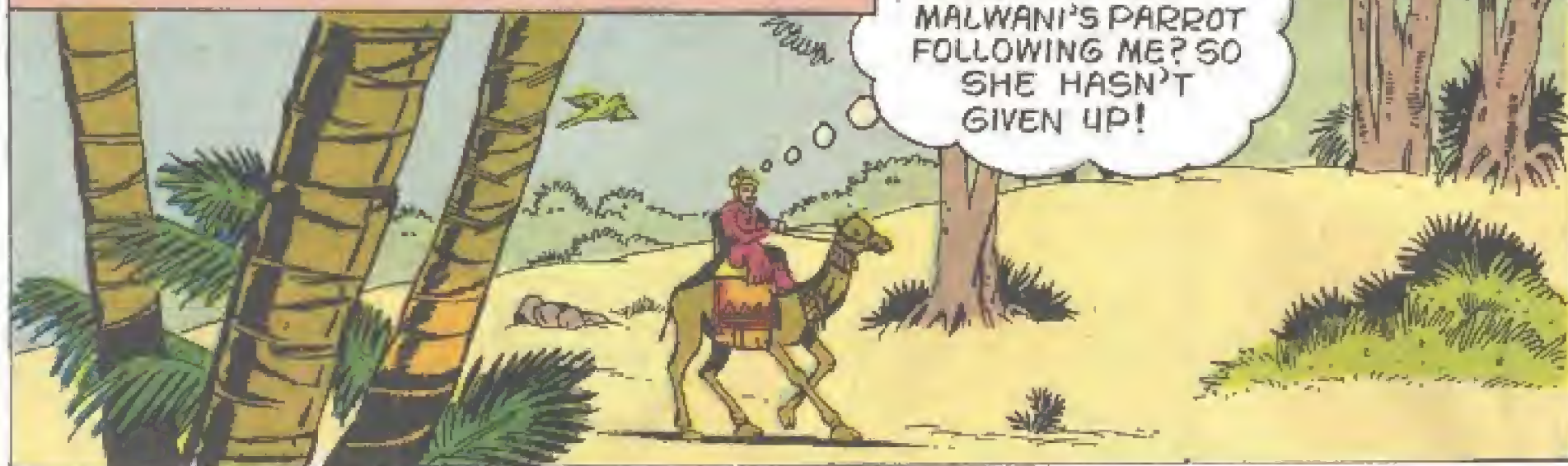
OH... WHAT WAS THAT? CAMEL BELLS! DHOLA... WHERE IS MY DHOLA?



OH, MARU... IS THIS HOW IT FEELS... TO PINE FOR A BELOVED?



BUT SOME HOURS LATER, MANY MILES AWAY—



WHY, ISN'T THAT  
MALWANI'S PARROT  
FOLLOWING ME? SO  
SHE HASN'T  
GIVEN UP!



PRINCE, PRINCE  
— COME HOME  
AT ONCE!  
MALWANI  
JUST FELL  
UNCONSCIOUS  
AND DIED.

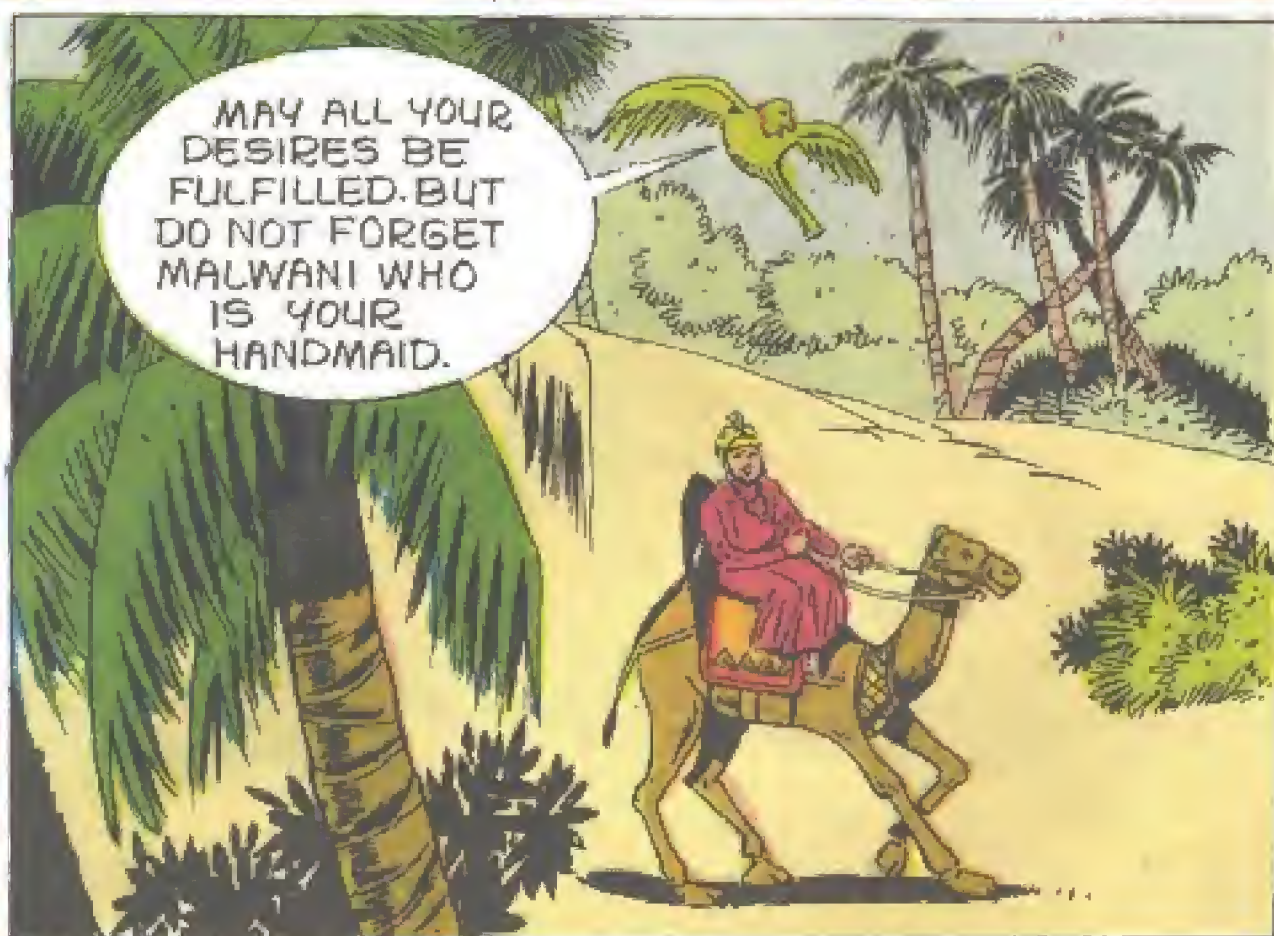
THEN DO AS I TELL YOU,  
GOOD PARROT. GO BACK,  
TAKE NINE MAUNDS OF  
SANDALWOOD AND  
CREMATE MALWANI'S  
BODY WITH ALL  
CEREMONY.



DEAR PRINCE, WHAT  
I TOLD YOU WAS NOT  
TRUE. I KNOW NOW  
THAT NOTHING CAN  
STOP YOU FROM  
GOING TO MARU.  
FORGIVE ME.



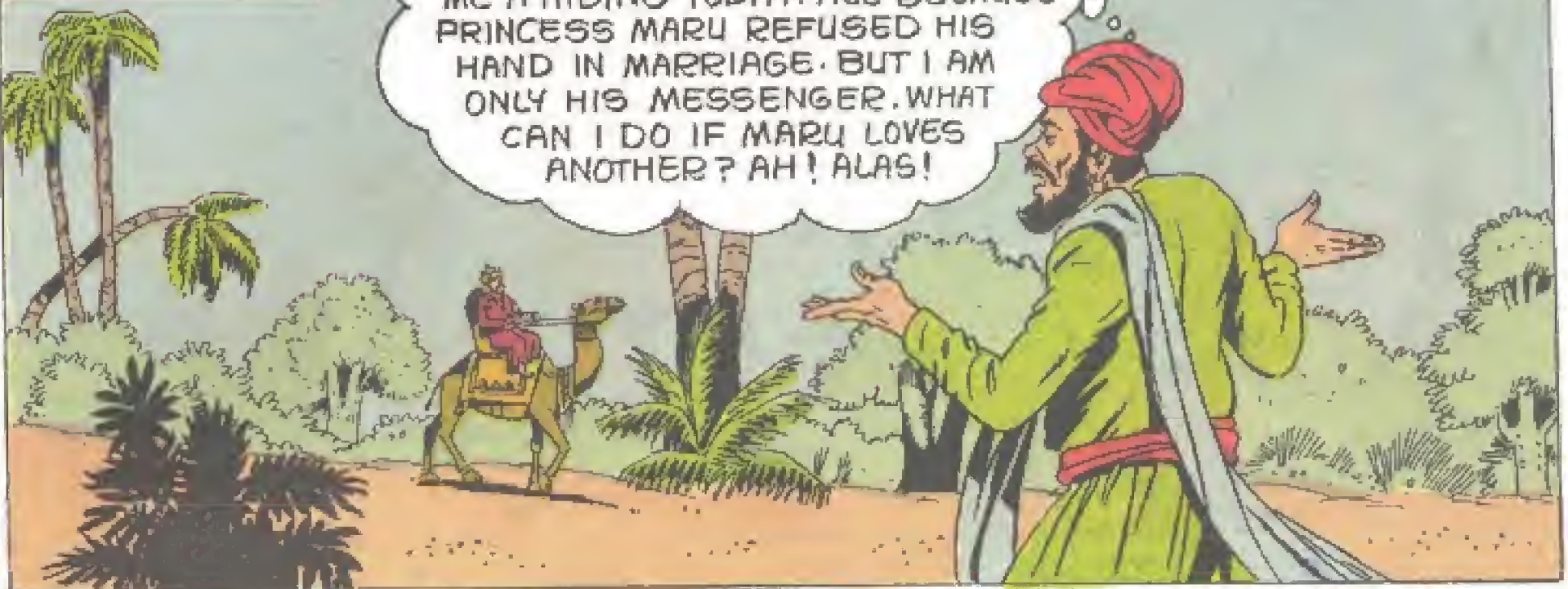
MAY ALL YOUR  
DESIRES BE  
FULFILLED. BUT  
DO NOT FORGET  
MALWANI WHO  
IS YOUR  
HANDMAID.





MEANWHILE —

ALAS! ALAS! MY MASTER WILL GIVE ME A HIDING TODAY. ALL BECAUSE PRINCESS MARU REFUSED HIS HAND IN MARRIAGE. BUT I AM ONLY HIS MESSENGER. WHAT CAN I DO IF MARU LOVES ANOTHER? AH! ALAS!



WELL, WHO COMES HERE?



HA, FRIEND! WHERE ARE YOU BOUND ON THIS COLD, RAW DAY?

I AM PRINCE DHOLA OF NARWAR. I GO TO MEET MY BRIDE MARU.



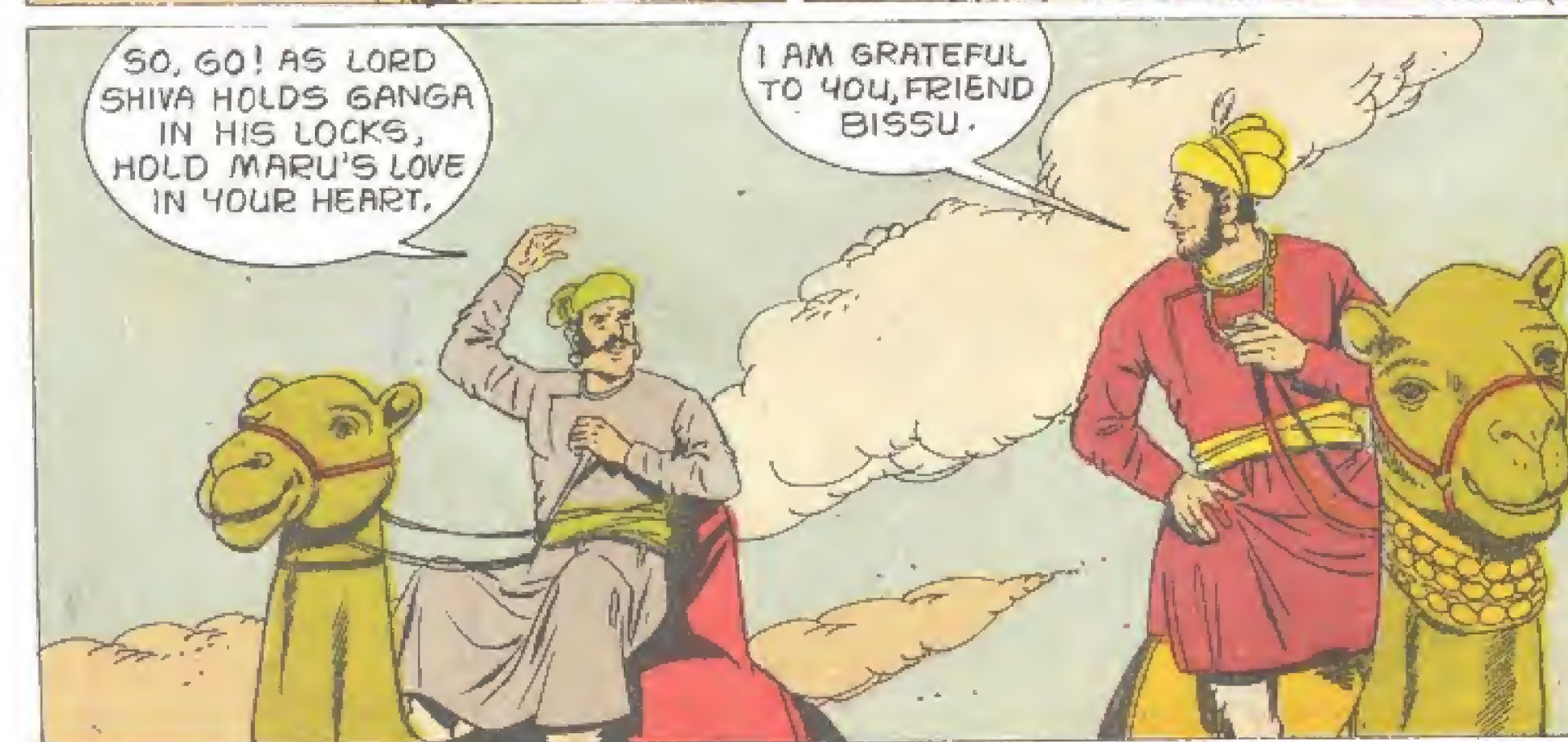
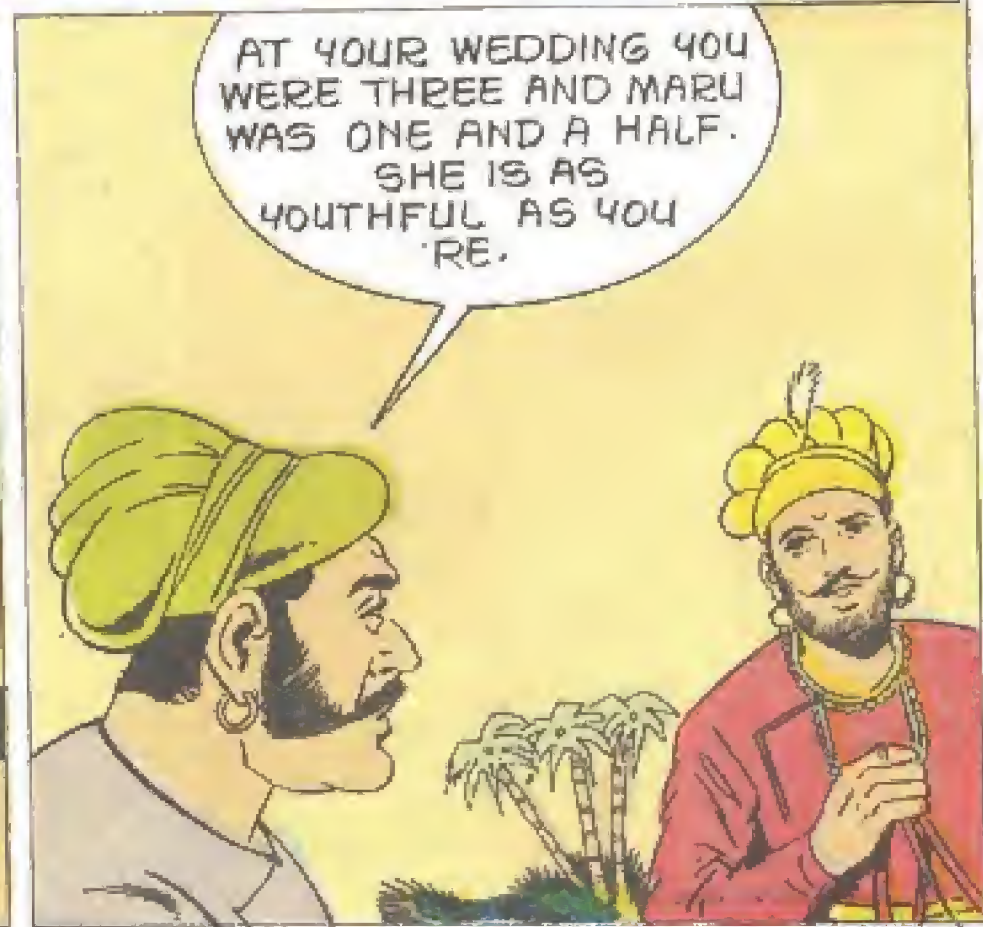
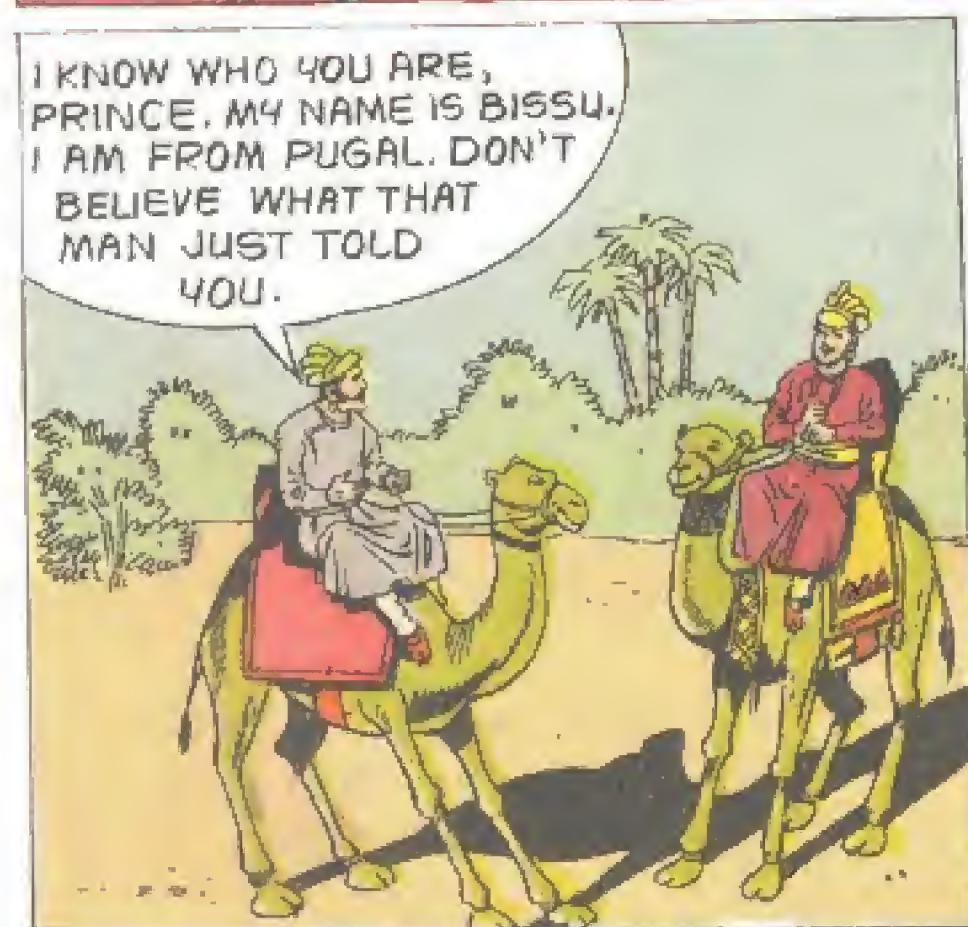
WHAT A COINCIDENCE! SO THIS IS THE MAN MARU PREFERS TO MY MASTER, UMAR SUMARU! WELL...



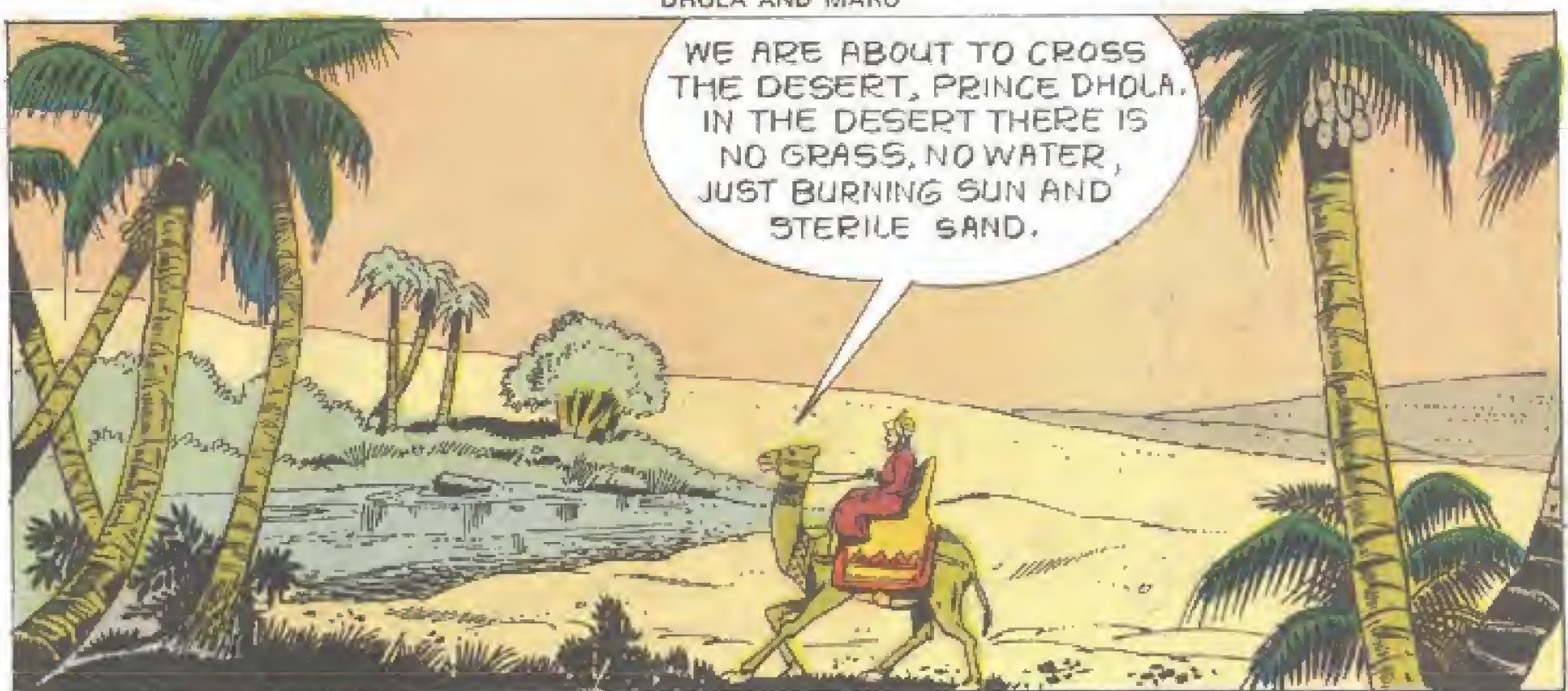
MY POOR MAN, YOU ARE TOO LATE, MARU OF PUGAL HAS BECOME OLD AND HER HAIR HAS TURNED GREY.







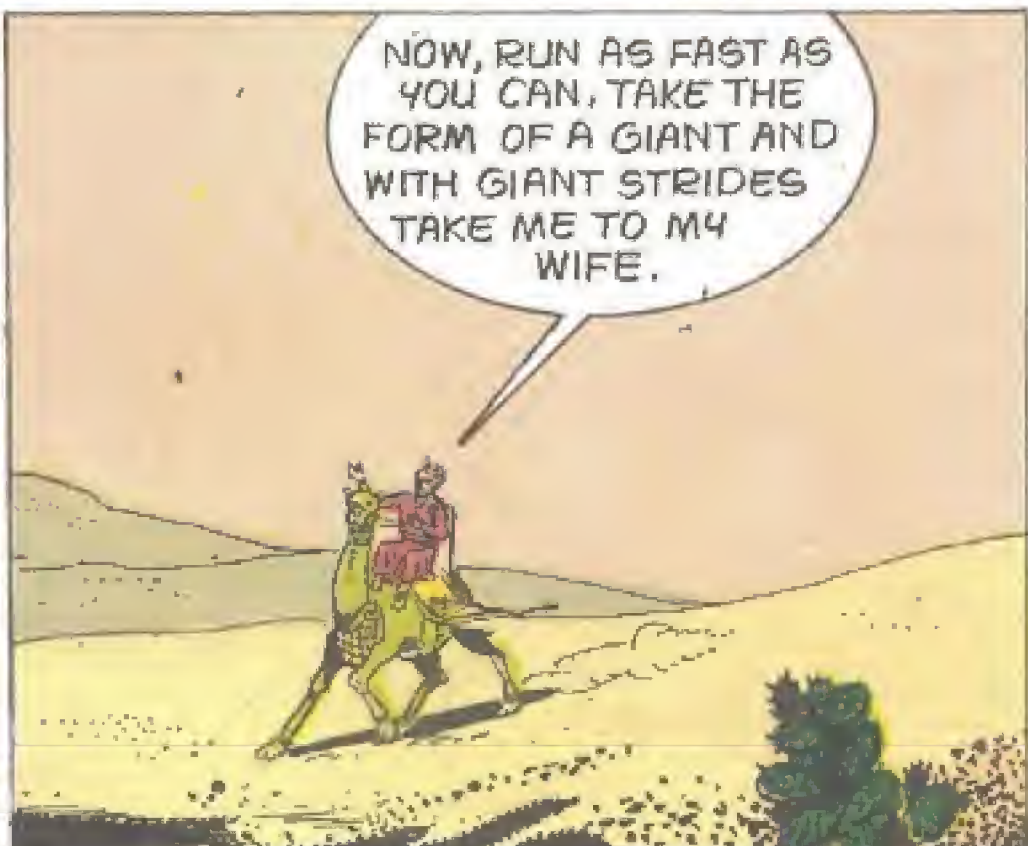




WE ARE ABOUT TO CROSS THE DESERT, PRINCE DHOLA. IN THE DESERT THERE IS NO GRASS, NO WATER, JUST BURNING SUN AND STERILE SAND.



THEN DRINK ENOUGH WATER NOW, MY FRIEND, TO SUSTAIN YOURSELF.



NOW, RUN AS FAST AS YOU CAN, TAKE THE FORM OF A GIANT AND WITH GIANT STRIDES TAKE ME TO MY WIFE.



FASTER! YOU ARE TOO SLOW!



I MUST REACH PUGAL BEFORE THE LAMPS ARE LIT.

PATIENCE, PRINCE. TIGHTEN YOUR TURBAN. KEEP MY BRIDLE LOOSE. I WILL CARRY YOU TO PUGAL BY SUNDOWN.



AND SOON, AT PUGAL —

FATHER,  
MOTHER — I  
HAVE COME.

IS IT REALLY  
YOU, DHOLA?  
GO — MARU IS  
WAITING FOR  
YOU.





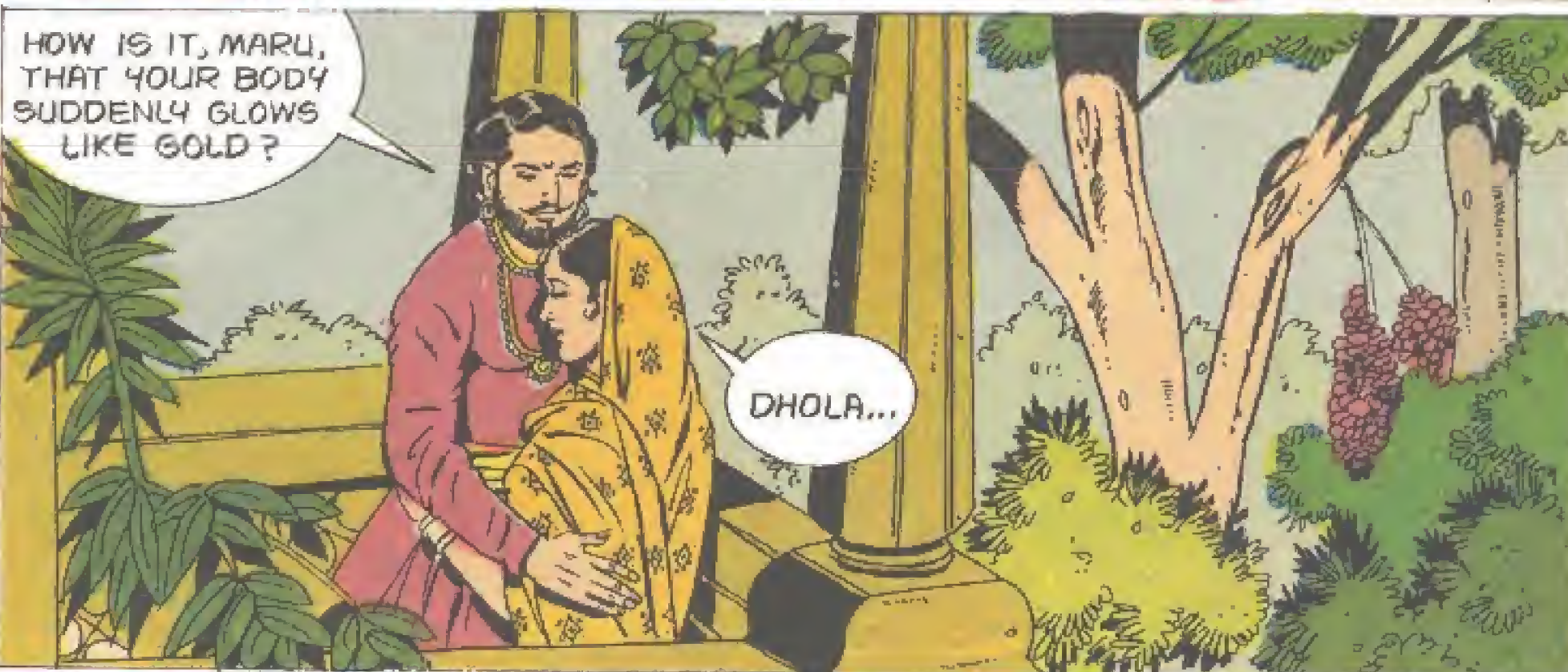
MARU! IT IS  
I-DHOLA!



NOW, I  
SHALL NEVER  
LET YOU  
GO.



HOW IS IT, MARU,  
THAT YOUR BODY  
SUDDENLY GLOWS  
LIKE GOLD?



DHOLA...

... FROGS THAT LIE  
ALMOST DEAD IN THE  
SUMMER HEAT, COME  
OUT IN LARGE  
NUMBERS WHEN THE  
RAINS FALL.



YOU HAVE  
COME LIKE RAIN  
AND BROUGHT  
ME BACK TO  
LIFE.





FIFTEEN HAPPY DAYS LATER —

I AM TAKING  
MY MARU HOME.  
THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR LOVE AND  
YOUR HOSPITALITY.

GOODBYE,  
BELOVED  
PARENTS.



LATER, ON THE WAY —

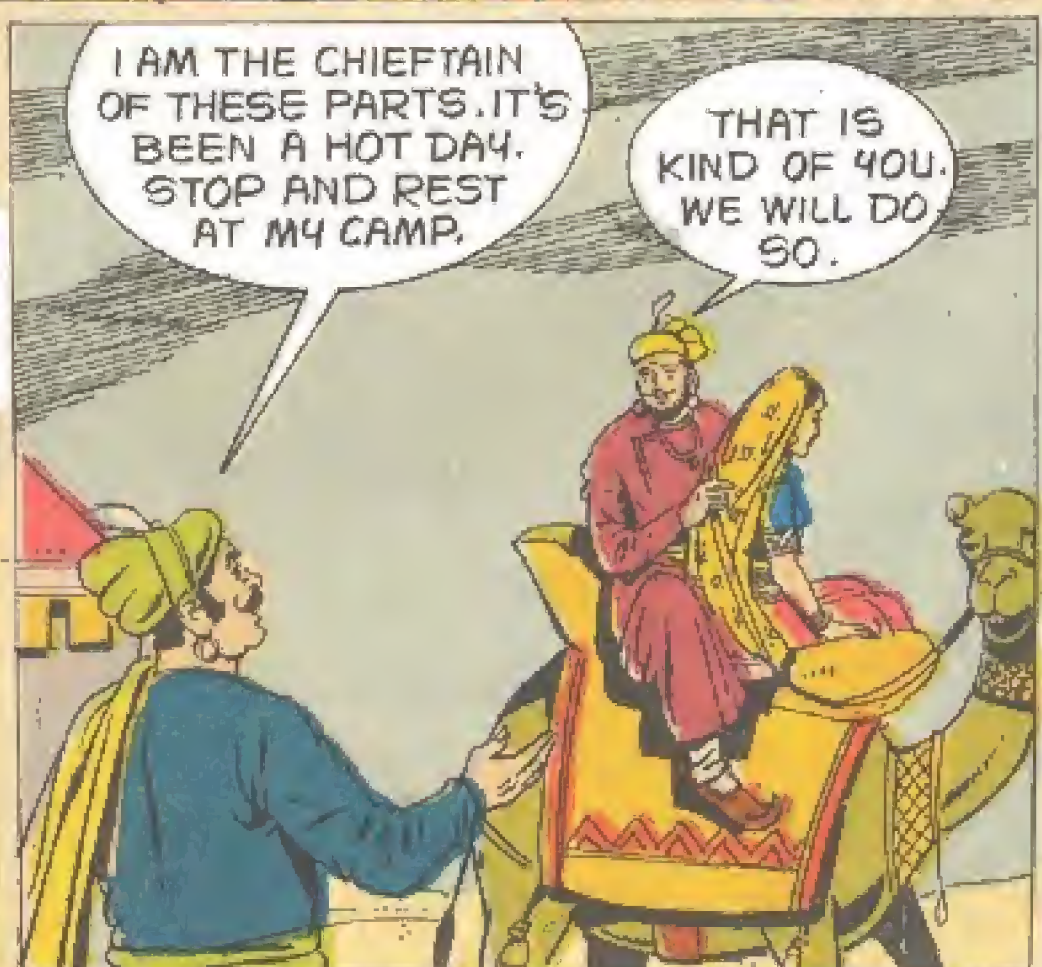
HO, THERE!  
ARE YOU  
ALONE?

WE SENT  
OUR MEN  
AHEAD, SIR.



I AM THE CHIEFTAIN  
OF THESE PARTS. IT'S  
BEEN A HOT DAY.  
STOP AND REST  
AT MY CAMP,

THAT IS  
KIND OF YOU.  
WE WILL DO  
SO.





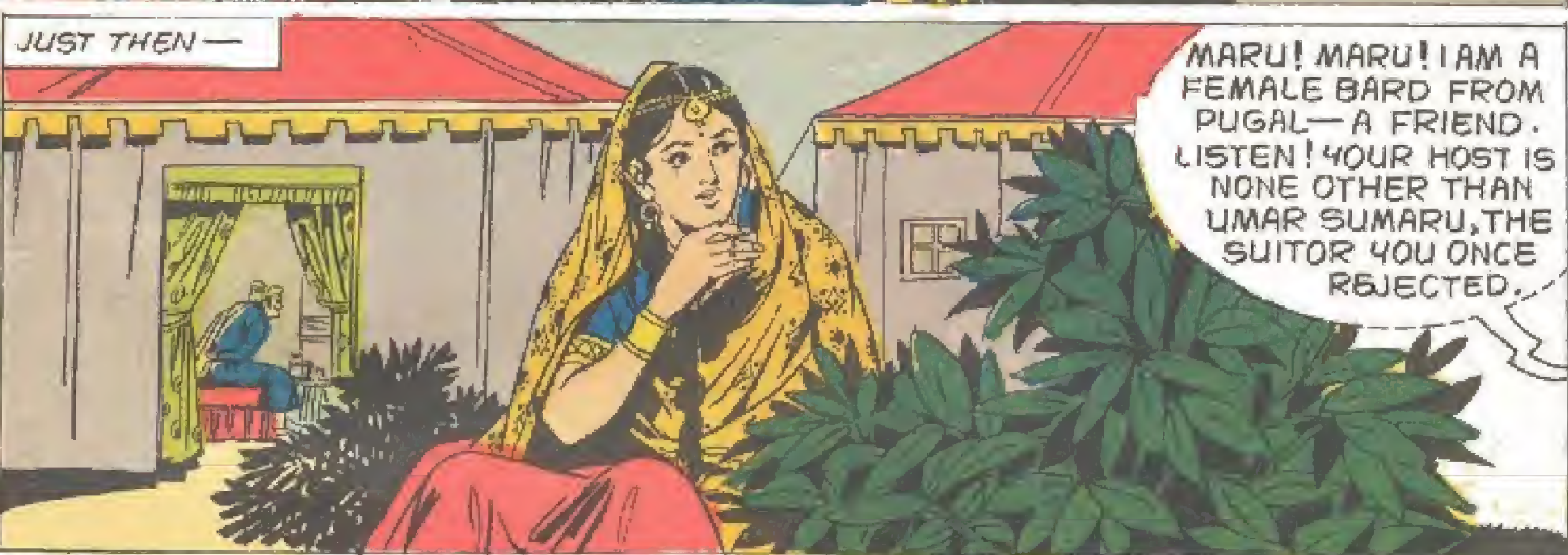
LATER, THAT EVENING —

DHOLA IS ENJOYING  
THE FEAST... BUT...  
WHY IS THAT MAN  
TAKING UP A KNIFE  
FROM BEHIND HIM?



JUST THEN —

MARU! MARU! I AM A  
FEMALE BARD FROM  
PUGAL—A FRIEND.  
LISTEN! YOUR HOST IS  
NONE OTHER THAN  
UMAR SUMARU, THE  
SUITOR YOU ONCE  
REJECTED.



HE IS ABOUT TO KILL  
DHOLA AND CAPTURE  
YOU. QUICK! DO  
SOMETHING TO GET  
DHOLA AWAY FROM  
THERE.





SUDDENLY —

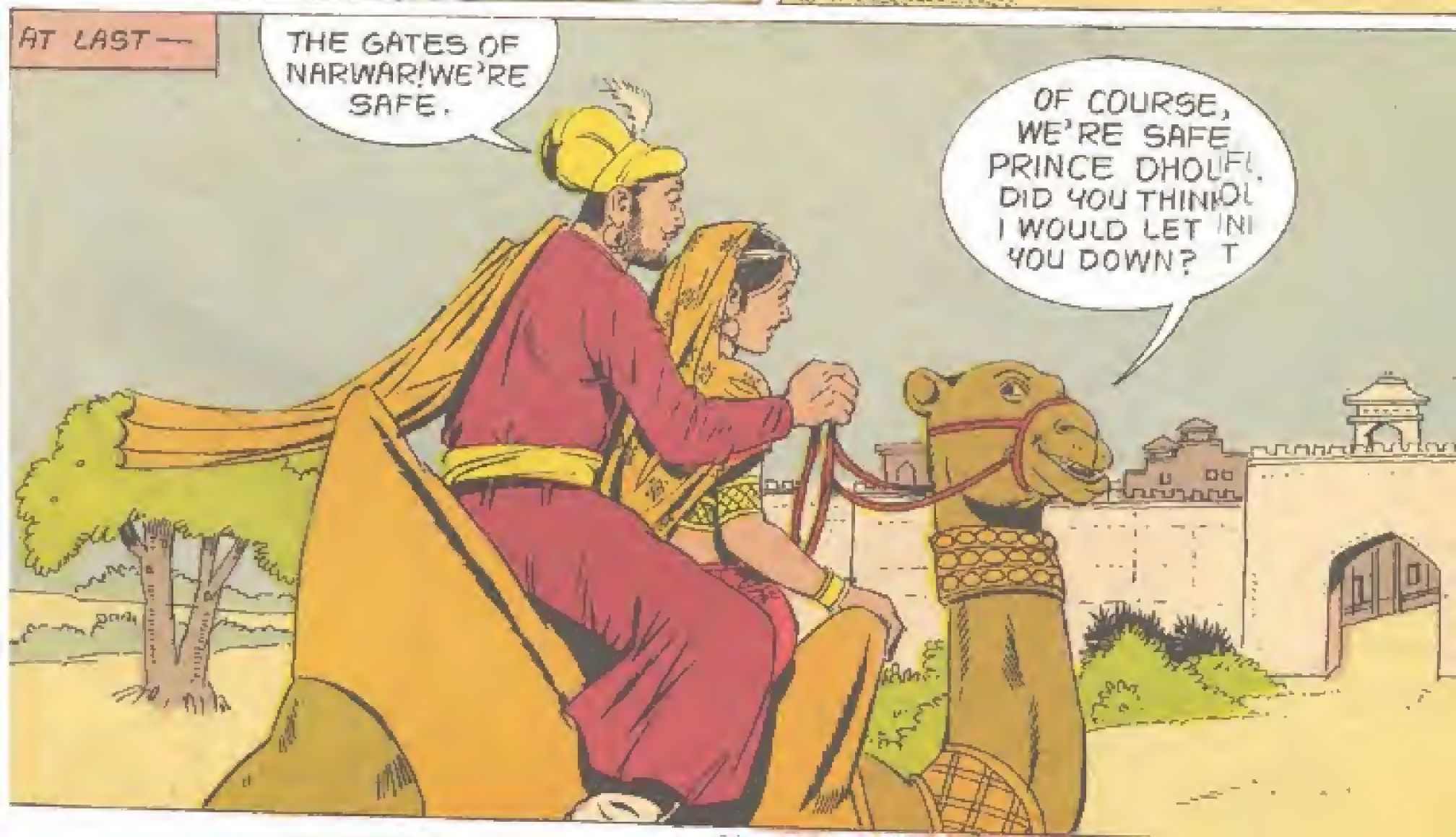
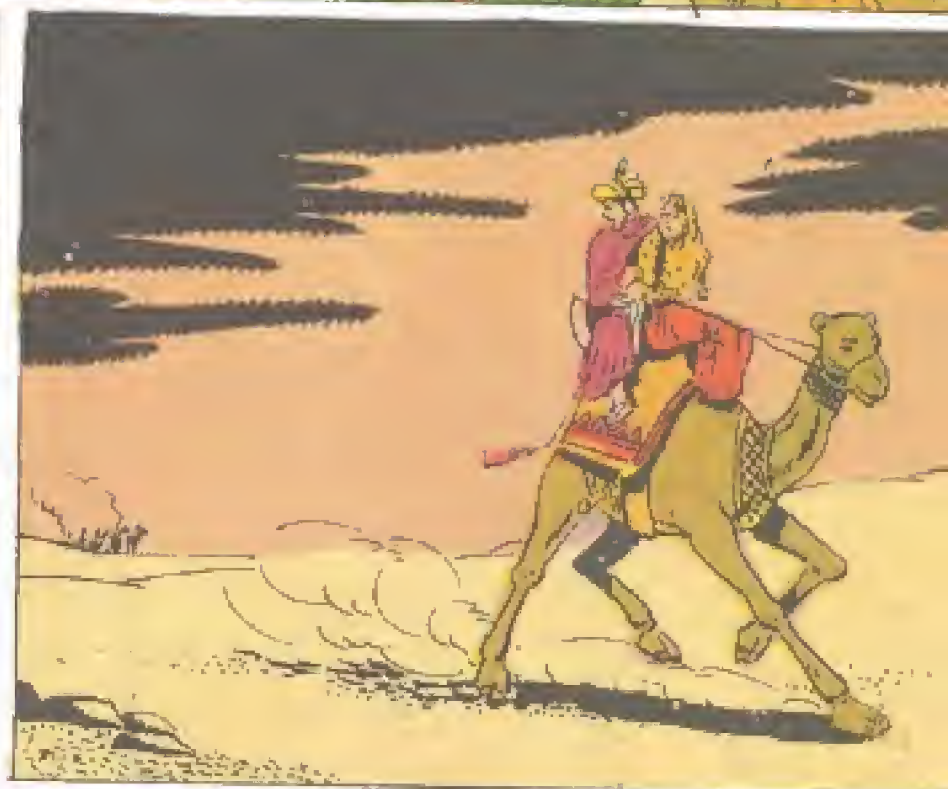
OH! THAT'S MY  
CAMEL. WHY IS HE  
STAMPING ABOUT  
AND GROANING? I'LL  
SEE WHAT'S  
WRONG.

DON'T BOTHER.  
MY MAN WILL  
TAKE CARE OF  
HIM...

NO,  
ONLY I CAN  
CONTROL  
HIM.

DHOLA, OUR  
HOST WAS ABOUT  
TO KILL YOU. YOUR  
CAMEL DID  
EVERYTHING I TOLD  
HIM TO. LET'S FLEE  
FROM HERE.



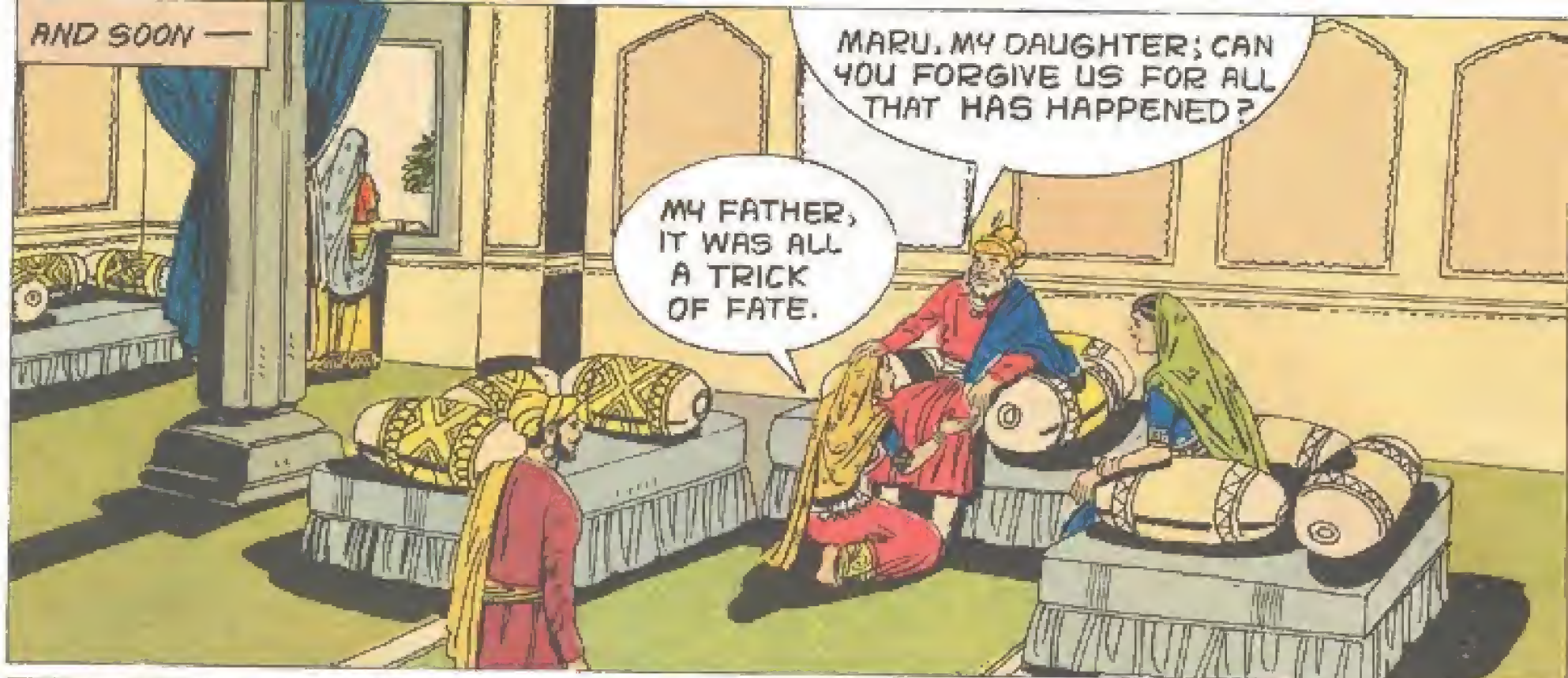




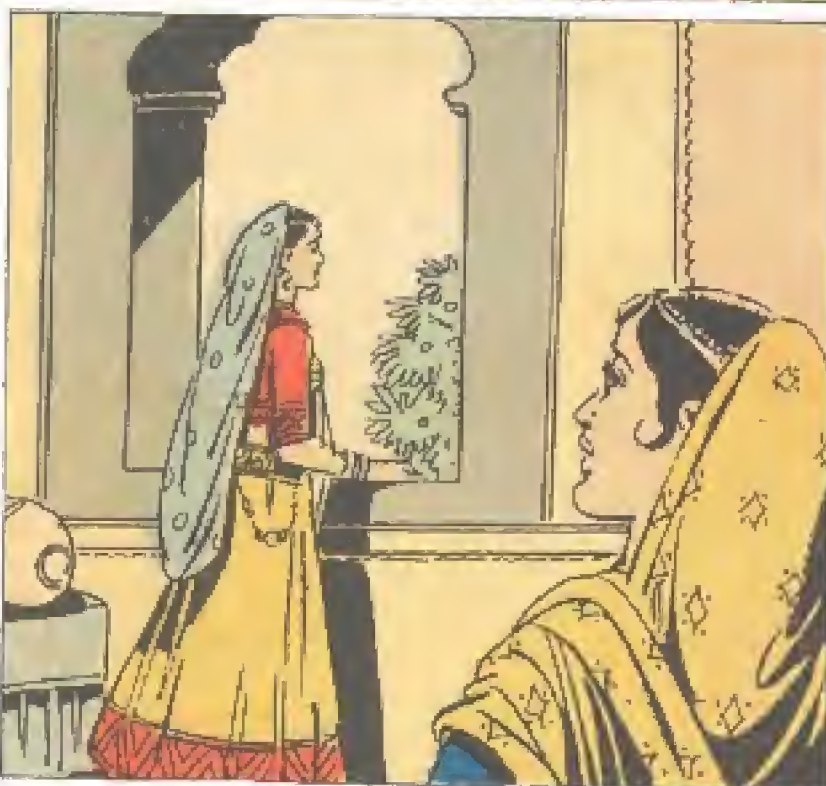
AND SOON —

MARU, MY DAUGHTER; CAN YOU FORGIVE US FOR ALL THAT HAS HAPPENED?

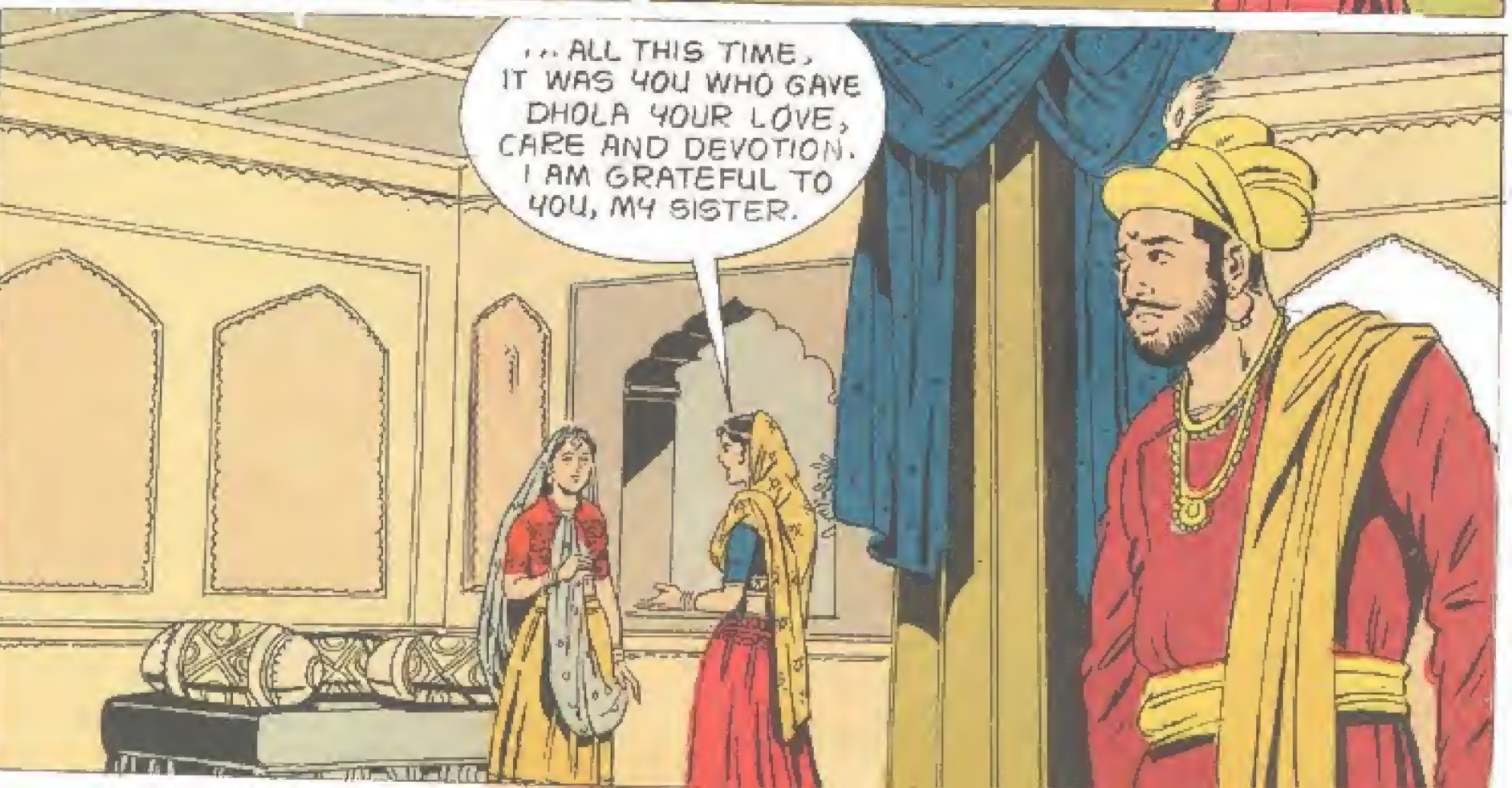
MY FATHER, IT WAS ALL A TRICK OF FATE.



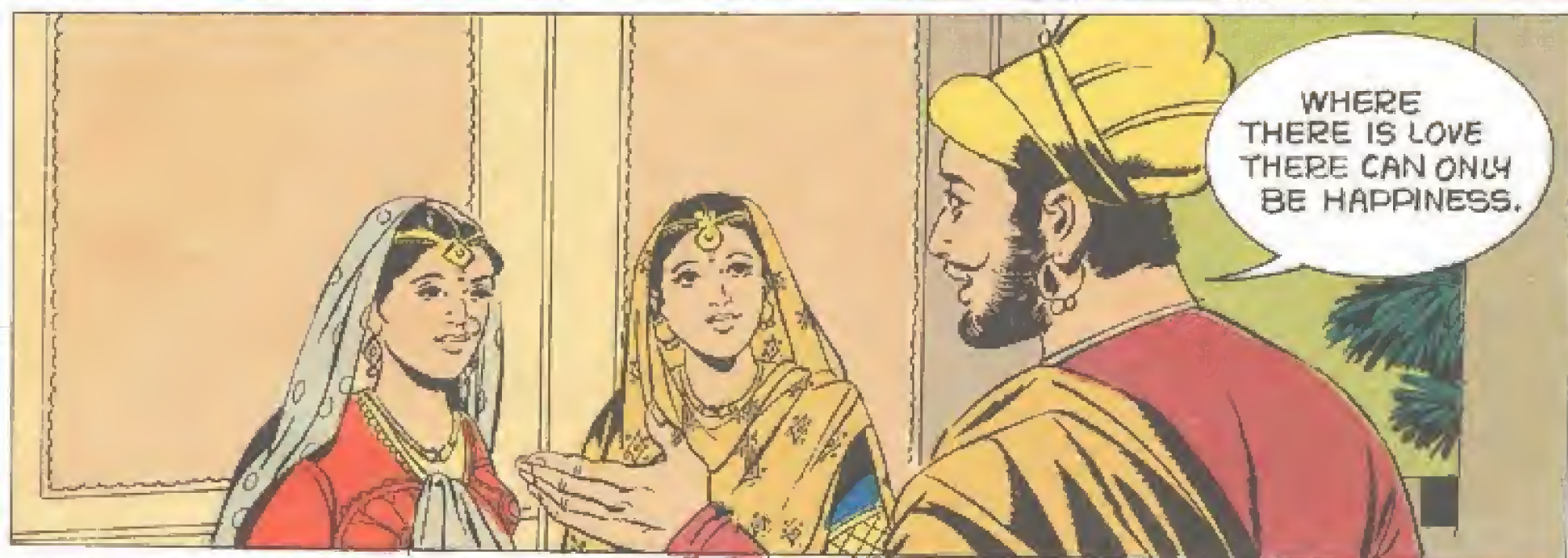
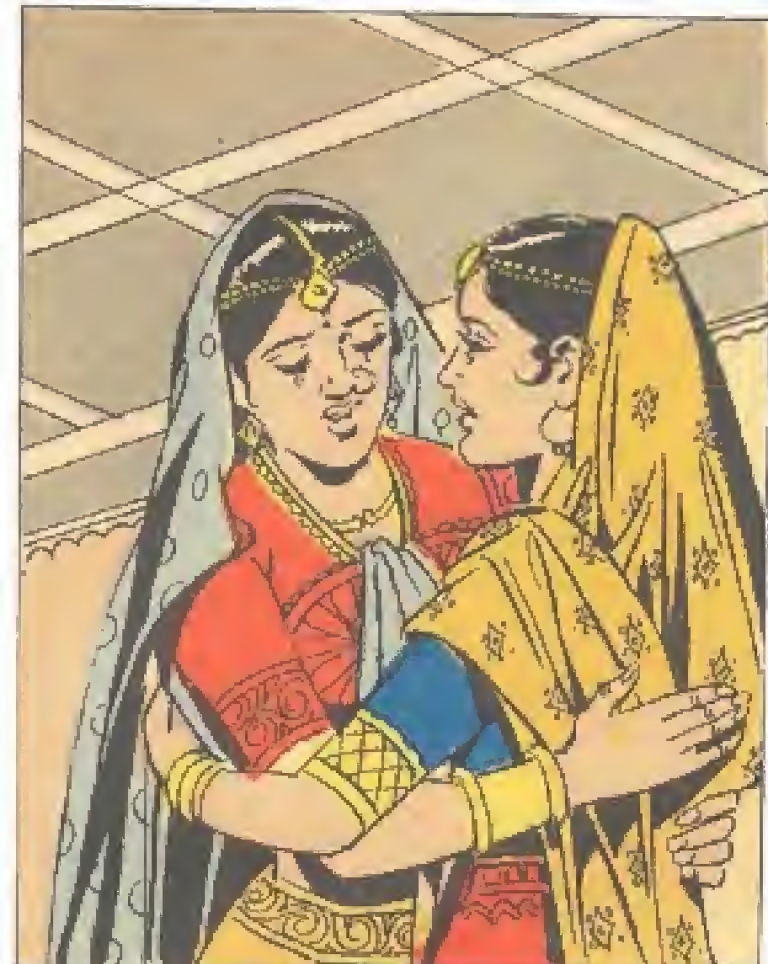
MALWANI...



... ALL THIS TIME, IT WAS YOU WHO GAVE DHOLA YOUR LOVE, CARE AND DEVOTION. I AM GRATEFUL TO YOU, MY SISTER.









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